

The Report
of the
International Conversations
between
The Anglican Communion
and
The Baptist World Alliance

Conversations
Around the World
2000 - 2005



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Contents

	Paragraphs	Page
Foreword		5
1. Introduction: A new way of talking together		7
Part One: The Report		
2. The Two World Communions		
The Anglican Communion.....		15
The Baptist World Alliance.....		17
3. Themes of the Conversations		
Introduction	1 - 2	21
The Importance of Continuity	3 - 17	22
Confessing the Faith.....	18 - 26	31
Mission and Ministry	27 - 39	36
Baptism and the Process of Initiation	40 - 52	44
Membership of the Church	53 - 61	51
The Eucharist or Lord's Supper	62 - 68	55
<i>Episkope</i> or Oversight	69 - 78	60
The Meaning of Recognition	79 - 90	64
4. Questions and Challenges		73
Part Two: Stories		
5. Anglican-Baptist Partnership Around the World		
Sharing in Informal Conversations: England		83
Sharing in a Council of Churches: Myanmar.....		84
Sharing in Witness to Society: The Republic of Georgia.....		85
Sharing in Local Ecumenical Partnerships: England		89
Sharing in Theological Education: The Caribbean.....		91
Sharing in a United Church: North India		93
6. Conclusion to the Report:		
'Sharing in the apostolic mission'		97
Appendices		
A. Participants in the International Conversations		99
B. Papers Given in the Regional Meetings.....		102
Notes		105

Foreword

It gives the Baptist World Alliance and the Anglican Communion Office great pleasure to sponsor together the publication of the report of the conversations between representatives of the two world communions set out in this book. We believe that it contains an engaging record of a fresh way to undertake dialogue, and offers valuable insights which will prompt both theological reflection and instances of practical co-operation in mission between our two faith families. There is certainly a plethora of both contained within these pages.

The genesis of this present volume is set out in the Introduction by the Anglican and Baptist Co-chairs of the Continuation Committee, but we would like to thank them for their wise guidance of the process of conversations, and especially Dr Paul Fiddes, who undertook an astounding labour of love in producing a rolling digest of the substance of the conversations at each stage; a digest which ultimately became the heart of the completed text.

Thanks also go to the Revd Terrie Robinson and Mr Ian Harvey of the Anglican Communion Office for their dedicated work in assisting Dr Fiddes in the final editing of the text and its preparation for publication, and to all those others who have helped this publication come to full birth.

The text has already been presented to the Executive of the Baptist World Alliance at its meeting in March 2005, at which they commended the report for publication and for consideration by the Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in July 2006. The report will also be considered at the thirteenth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, which takes place in Nottingham, the United Kingdom, in June 2005.

However, we hope and pray that its real value might lie not within the councils of our denominations, but in assisting Anglican and Baptist disciples of the Lord to understand their own and each other's faith more completely; to inspire us to work together more closely and to bear witness to that same Lord, who is the Life and Salvation of the World, and who calls us to fullness of life in Him.

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Director of Ecumenical Affairs, the Anglican Communion Office
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Director of Study and Research, Baptist World Alliance
May 2005

1

Introduction: A new way of talking together

When two world-wide Christian communions are given the opportunity, and the responsibility, of spending five years in talking together in meetings on an international level, then a historic moment has been reached. Between 2000 and 2005, the Anglican Communion and the Baptist World Alliance have engaged in officially authorized 'International Conversations'. Unlike other ecumenical conversations, the purpose of these has not been to work towards any scheme for structural unity; neither of the two commissioning bodies had this in mind, and nor did their member churches. But this has still been a deeply serious - as well as joyous - enterprise. The intention has been to deepen mutual understanding, in personal and theological terms, and by this means to lay the ground for more effective ways for Baptists and Anglicans around the globe to confess their faith together and to share together in the mission of God. Theology, life and action have always been linked in the discussions of the participants. This has been a purpose in which it has been worth investing time, travel, and hard and sometimes painful thinking.

To flesh out this intention, an initial meeting between staff of the two communions in McLean, Virginia in March 2000 set out the following objectives for the International Conversations:

1. To enable Anglicans and Baptists to learn from each other and to deepen understanding of relationships between our two communions in the light of their histories.
2. To share with each other how we understand the Christian faith and to work towards a common confession of the Apostolic Faith.
3. To identify issues of doctrine and the nature of the church to be explored further in possible future conversations.
4. To look for ways to co-operate in mission and community activities, and to increase our fellowship and common witness to the Gospel.

While not being formal conversations on the way to visible unity, these conversations have thus broken through some usual ecumenical patterns in being more than 'getting to know you' exercises. This has been possible because there are already practical partnerships in worship and mission between Baptists and Anglicans in many parts of the world, a situation to which the

Introduction

stories told later in this report amply bear witness.

Following an invitation received from a Baptist World Alliance General Council meeting, the Lambeth Conference of 1988 first mandated for Anglicans a dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Baptist World Alliance. Through the next decade the leadership of the Baptist World Alliance continued to ask that the resolution be acted upon, and in response the Lambeth Conference in 1998 passed the following resolution IV.15:

This Conference recommends as a priority the implementation of resolution 10(3) of Lambeth 1988, by developing, in partnership with the Baptist World Alliance, co-ordinated regional and local discussions leading to the establishment of a continuing forum between Anglicans and Baptists at the world level.¹

It was part of the objectives proposed in 2000 to ‘identify’ doctrinal and ecclesiological issues, aiming for eventual elucidation of key theological areas ‘in possible future conversations’. From the Anglican side at least, as expressed in the recommendation of the Lambeth Conference for a ‘continuing forum’, it was assumed that these conversations might be the first of two or more further rounds. Perhaps it seemed that not much could be expected in terms of theological conclusions at the end of the first quinquennium. While the present report is certainly not meant to be a definitive doctrinal document for either of the communions, the account of the conversations does in fact represent in some detail the theological positions of Anglicans and Baptists on many issues at the turn of the millennium - an important historic moment that represents a milestone of sorts in the ongoing story of Christianity in the modern world. Those participating in the conversations in different regions of the world clearly wanted, for their part, to make a careful exploration of the major theological issues confronting their two denominations. Without exceeding the remit given to them, the staff of the two communions and the co-chairmen felt it was appropriate to refer to the discussions not just as an ‘international forum’ but as ‘international conversations’.

Responding to this, the report offers not only a description of the views offered, no mere record of the conversations, but some theological reflection upon central themes. The report attempts to make some serious comment on points of sameness and divergence in areas of faith and life, and perhaps more progress has been achieved than was at first anticipated. The core committee responsible for the report has thus come to feel, through this experience, that the best way forward at this stage in Anglican-Baptist relations is not to move into further rounds of talks in the immediate future, but rather for

a period to invite response to what has come to light through these conversations. We hope that this report will be received and widely read among the theologians and churches in the various regions of the world which have shaped it, and that their responses will lay the foundation for any future conversations that it might seem right to hold. We believe that this fulfils the recommendation of Lambeth to establish a ‘continuing forum’ in a way that reflects the diversity and the distribution of both our communions.

This hope relates to another aspect of the conversations that we feel has ‘broken the mould’ of ecumenical processes. Conversations between Christian churches usually take the form of appointing a fairly large representative group of participants who all meet together on a number of occasions; they might travel to different locations in the world to deal in turn with selected issues, and might well take the opportunity in doing so of taking soundings from the local communities. The officers of the Anglican Communion and the Baptist World Alliance, however, decided early on to make a much more thorough-going attempt at contextualizing the conversations in different cultures. The majority of the participants in the conversations would be appointed from churches in each of the six regions where the meetings were being held, while a small ‘Continuation Committee’ would attend all the meetings, facilitate the discussion and be responsible for the final drafting of the report. This committee has consisted of only three members from each communion, together with a staff member from the Baptist World Alliance and the Anglican Communion. Each regional meeting has included up to twelve representatives from the locality, about half Anglican and Baptist.

This method has allowed church leaders, theologians and church historians from each region to be engaged in the process, and to bring their own context and experience to bear on the subjects being discussed. The eight themes into which the report has been divided have themselves emerged from the regional meetings, with some being proposed from the first meeting, and others being added along the way through a kind of ‘rolling report’. Each regional group was informed of the deliberations of previous ones, but it was made clear that no fixed agenda was being imposed from the rounds that had already been held, so that new concerns and insights were genuinely able to emerge from each new context. In this way, voices have been listened to in turn from Europe (in Norwich, UK), Asia (in Yangon, Myanmar/Burma), Africa (in Nairobi, Kenya), the Southern Cone (in Santiago, Chile), the Caribbean (in Nassau, the Bahamas) and North America (in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada). The draft final report was then sent out to all participants from the different regions, for general comment and for specific assurance

Introduction

that they had been properly heard. We are truly grateful for the commitment and contribution of all those who have shared in this process.

The members of the Continuation Committee, Anglicans and Baptists, are unanimous that this different way of handling ecumenical conversations has enriched the discussions. It has meant that each theological issue addressed can be understood from the vantage point of the whole international family of both communions. It has enabled far more people to be directly involved in the venture, has provided the opportunity for a greater diversity of representation than would normally be possible, and should mean that the reception of the report will be more widespread because more people have an interest in promoting the results of discussions in which they have been involved. Moreover, each meeting has seemed spontaneously to encourage a unique fellowship between the representatives of each communion in a way that might not always have been anticipated. There have been new opportunities for Anglicans and Baptists to worship together, and also to share in the Lord's Supper. This truly heartening aspect of the process has, then, been more than just social courteousness. It indicates on its own a positive future for ways in which the two communions might anticipate further labours together for the sake of the salvation of the world which is the Lord's.

As co-chairmen, we believe we should offer a brief word of explanation about why the report does not refer to two recent events which have had a large impact on each of the communions in which they have happened. The Continuing Committee, towards the end of its work, was aware of the disruption that had been caused within the unity of the Anglican Communion by the consecration of an Episcopalian bishop in New Hampshire, USA, who lives in a committed homosexual relationship. At the same time, it was aware of the proposal from the largest Baptist convention in the world, the Southern Baptist Convention, to relinquish its membership in the Baptist World Alliance. The Continuation Committee felt that it should not address either issue in the final report for a number of reasons. First, both issues arose right at the end of the conversations in the regions (which were concluded in 2003), and there had been no opportunity for them to be discussed in any of the regional meetings. Given the method of this report as described above, it would have been contrary to the whole process of reflecting on church life in context for the Continuing Committee to have introduced a new topic altogether, for which it had no mandate from the regional groups with which it had been working. Second, with regard to the ordination of the Episcopalian bishop, the Continuing Committee noted that the reaction from Provinces within the Anglican Communion made clear that this was a highly contested

and local matter, and could not be regarded as reflecting the agreed teaching, doctrine or attitude of the family of Anglican churches throughout the world. It therefore did not affect the issues actually dealt with in the report, which arose out of four hundred years of history together, and the theological and practical interactions between Anglicans and Baptists during that period. Neither would it have been useful, in the task of mutual understanding, to have debated the reasons why Southern Baptists had withdrawn from the world fellowship of Baptists. Third, it was thought inappropriate in a report of this kind for one world communion to make pronouncements on the internal affairs of the other, when the issues are not those which lie between Anglicans and Baptists, but are issues being dealt with by the respective communions themselves.

Reports often carry recommendations. The Continuing Committee felt that the nature of these ‘international conversations’, breaking the usual patterns, meant that recommendations to the two commissioning bodies would not be in place. However, the members of the committee felt that deep challenges *had* emerged for both communions that needed to be faced for the sake of the Gospel. On the one hand, the report of the conversations shows how close - sometimes surprisingly close - the two communions are to each other in fundamental theological issues, and how great the potential is for further partnership in practical projects in the post-colonial, post-modern (and in the West, post-Christian) world in which we all live. While differences remain, especially on the issues of baptism and episcopacy, it can be seen from the report that the participants in the conversations regarded these not as hopeless barriers of division, but as signs of Christian devotion and faithfulness which were rooted in the experiences of history and which had been properly kept alive in the hearts of believers through the generations. On the other hand, if we are, as the objectives express it, to ‘look for ways to co-operate in mission and community activities, and to increase our fellowship and common witness to the Gospel’, then we need to look for even greater convergences in doctrine and practice. The questions which have been attached to the report in place of recommendations are intended to help both our communions to do this. The Continuation Committee has some confidence that these questions will be taken no less seriously than formal recommendations, and it is on this note of lively hope that it ends its task.

Paul S. Fiddes, Co-Chairman (Baptist)

Bruce Matthews, Co-Chairman (Anglican)

Part One: The Report

2

The Two World Communions

The Anglican Communion

The Anglican Communion is the name adopted by a family of some 44 churches² across the globe. These are comprised of 34 ‘provinces’ (national or regional churches), four ‘united churches’, and six ‘extra-provincial jurisdictions’.

The Communion traces its origins back to the original Christian churches of the British Isles; these were founded in the second or third centuries by unknown missionaries to the Celtic peoples, and also in the seventh century amongst the Saxon peoples by the mission from Pope Gregory headed by St Augustine of Canterbury.

At the time of the Reformation, these churches renounced the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome in order to undertake a process of reform in life and doctrine, aided initially by a king of England who had his own reasons for such a breach. The attempt to impose a new doctrinal and ecclesial unity on the peoples of Britain and Ireland failed in the course of the seventeenth century, leading to the establishment of a Presbyterian Church of Scotland and limited freedoms of dissent in the other kingdoms of the British Isles; it was within this framework that Baptist, Congregationalist and English and Welsh Presbyterian churches emerged. The Church of England remained the majority church in England and Wales, together with a separate Anglican Church of Ireland,³ and a Scottish Episcopal Church. The essential character of these churches lay, as expressed in the motto which the Scottish Episcopal Church has retained to this day, in the assertion of ‘Evangelical Truth and Apostolic Order’.

For many years Anglicans and Baptists co-existed, and increasing British exploration, colonization and merchant activity provided the opportunity for Anglican and Baptist missions to carry the Christian Gospel to every continent, although Anglican churches abroad effectively operated as overseas branches of the Church of England.

The first big crisis in the external ordering of Anglican life came with the American Revolution, when, faced with intransigence and constitutional difficulties in England, American Anglicans resorted to the Scottish Episcopal Church to provide them with an independent episcopate. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the developing ‘naturalization’ of Anglicanism in

The Two World Communion

different societies across the globe, together with a renewal and rediscovery of, in turn, both its evangelical and catholic spirituality.

In the course of the nineteenth century, disputes in South Africa about biblical criticism and the nature of authority led in 1867 to the creation of the *Lambeth Conference* as a means by which Anglican bishops across the globe could consult with one another on matters of import affecting the whole; another impulse was the realization that new ways must be found to express the global nature of Anglicanism. In parallel with a process of decolonization in the British Empire, a recognition of the autonomy of Anglican churches operating in ‘the Dominions’, and eventually other former colonies, led to the creation of separate *Provinces of the Anglican Communion*. The phrase ‘Communion’ was adopted to mark the essentially spiritual nature of the bond which holds the churches together, but one which implies a unity of doctrine and discipline which is centred historically on the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1571 and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and the accompanying Ordinal.

The twentieth century saw the growth of the Communion, not only in organization but also in successful mission. In 1900, there were estimated, by the standards of the time, to be 31 million Anglicans; by 1968, this had become 59 million. Today it is estimated that there may be around 78 million Anglicans, although it is difficult to ascertain numbers with exactitude in situations of huge mission activity and there is the added difficulty of determining a universally agreed statistical basis. A core of thirteen provinces in 1930 had grown into 31 provinces and autonomous churches by 1978; growth has continued to the numbers of the present day. Anglican ‘churches’ vary in size between large African churches with 15-18 million adherents through to smaller churches (‘extra-provincial jurisdictions’, which do not sustain a provincial structure) of between five to ten thousand members.

The last century also saw the growth of diversity in Anglican theology and practice, but the Communion has remained defined largely by geography (national or regional churches) rather than by theological bias. This diversity has led to increasing tensions, so that the Communion has generated ‘Instruments of Unity’ to stand beside the Archbishop of Canterbury as the Communion’s focal points; these instruments are the Lambeth Conference (established 1867), the Anglican Consultative Council (established 1968) and the Primates’ Meetings (established 1978). Other churches have been adopted into the Communion, in Iberia and in South Asia. In the latter region much of Anglicanism has blended with Protestant denominations to form ‘United Churches’, which have retained episcopal government, and which are fully members of the Anglican Communion.

As the Anglican Communion enters the twenty-first century, it continues to grow. It has been said that the average Anglican is 'black, female, married with three children and under the age of thirty'. But the challenge of diversity grows as well. Theologically, the Communion is highly diverse, and has learned in recent years to become truly global. One church has become 44, and very recent tensions concerning sexual ethics have threatened to divide its historic unity. However, there remains a distinctive witness to a Christianity at once both evangelical and catholic, conservative and liberal, in which different traditions can find an almost contradictory expression within a single fellowship.

The Baptist World Alliance

Baptists are a missionary people. Since their beginnings 400 years ago, they have spread the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world, together with their particular way of living out the Christian faith. Baptists brought significant leadership to the modern missionary movement, especially through the pioneering work of William Carey in India, Adoniram Judson in Myanmar, George Lisle in Jamaica, Johann Gerhard Oncken in continental Europe, Alfred Saker in Cameroon, William Buck Bagby in Brazil and George Grenfell in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Today Baptists are strongly represented in the United States, India, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Brazil, Korea, Myanmar, Tanzania and Kenya. Indeed, very few countries can be found that do not have Baptist churches and people. Many Baptist unions and conventions that have been recipients of cross-cultural missionaries, generally from the western world, are today sending out their own committed disciples to engage in cross-cultural service.

Some Baptists trace their earliest origins, at least indirectly, to the sixteenth-century Anabaptists in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Holland. However, the more common view among Baptist historians is that 'General Baptists' arose out of English Puritan Separatists, when John Smyth formed a church practising believers' baptism out of a congregation of English exiles in Amsterdam in 1609; a portion of this church, with Thomas Helwys as its minister, returned to England forming the first Baptist congregation on English soil in Spitalfields, London in 1611. The 'Particular Baptists' emerged somewhat later, in about 1630, from Calvinistic Independent groups in England.

From those troubled and humble beginnings in England, Baptists have grown to become a major Protestant denomination that worships and serves God through Jesus Christ around the world. Baptists affirm and adhere to the

The Two World Communion

apostolic Christian faith including such doctrines as the Trinity and the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. At the same time, guided as they believe by the Spirit of God in obedience to the Word of God, Baptists are strongly committed to a church membership consisting of those who can profess faith for themselves, believers' baptism (normally by immersion), congregational polity and religious liberty for all human beings.

In 1905, Baptists from the United Kingdom and North America were instrumental in bringing into being a world fellowship of Baptist believers to which they gave the name 'The Baptist World Alliance' (BWA). The initial meeting was held in London and representatives of 23 nations attended.

One hundred years later, the membership of the BWA has grown to the extent that the statistical report at the end of 2004 (after the withdrawal of the Southern Baptist Convention in the USA) showed that there were about 31.5 million baptized believers in over 140,000 congregations around the globe. As these statistics refer only to people who have been baptized as believers and received into church membership, and not the children of Baptists, nor the many loyal attendees of Baptist congregations who for various reasons elect not to be baptized, the family of Baptists related to the BWA is assumed to be at least 80 million strong.

The evolution of the BWA from a body formed by European and North American Baptists to a world body that is truly representative of all its people can be seen in a number of ways. For example, the present and former presidents of the BWA are from Asia (Korea) and from Latin America (Brazil), respectively. Its sixteen vice-presidents are drawn from all over the world and its executive staff comprises nationals of the United States, Australia, England, Trinidad and Liberia. Each of the six regions of the BWA has a regional secretary appointed by and from within the region. The BWA offices are located in Falls Church, Virginia, USA, and the general secretary/treasurer is the executive officer of the BWA.

The BWA is the body that, in various ways, represents Baptists internationally. It seeks to address human needs through the Division of Baptist World Aid, to address issues of justice and human rights, religious freedom and racism through the office of the BWA general secretary, and to encourage Baptists in their ministries of mission, evangelism and discipleship through the Division of Education and Evangelism. Various Baptist leaders are well-known outside their own denomination for their global contributions: recent examples include Dr Martin Luther King Jr, Dr Billy Graham and President Jimmy Carter.

The BWA convenes international conferences on theological education, mission strategy, and worship and spirituality. It is uniquely positioned to provide opportunities for fellowship among its member bodies and their people. Every five years it calls together ordained ministers and other congregational leaders and church members from all its member bodies for a great international gathering featuring worship, instruction, sharing and fellowship. More recent congresses have been convened in Buenos Aires (1995) and Melbourne (2000) and the centenary Congress is scheduled for July 2005 in Birmingham, UK.

As a further expression of its desire for Christian fellowship and to obey the prayer of Jesus for the unity or oneness of his disciples, as well as to clarify differences, the BWA has, during the last quarter-century, entered into international theological conversations with other world Christian communions. These have included the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Roman Catholic Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity and the Mennonite World Conference. There have been ‘pre-conversations’ with the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. All these have been a prelude to the important international conversations that have taken place with the Anglican Communion between 2000 and 2005.

3

Themes of the Conversations

Introduction

1. The content of this account has been shaped by the objectives which motivated the conversations, and by the method which has been employed in holding them. The dominant mood of the account is thus descriptive, with the aim of increasing mutual understanding between Baptists and Anglicans. A major aim is to map the way that Baptists and Anglicans relate and work together at present throughout the world. Against this background, it is hoped to clarify convergences and divergences between the two world communions, to identify the convictions that are held in common and to face openly the differences that remain. Since the conversations have been held in six regional phases - Europe (Norwich, UK), Asia (Yangon, Myanmar/Burma), Africa (Nairobi, Kenya), the Southern Cone (Santiago, Chile), the Caribbean (Nassau, the Bahamas) and North America (Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada) - the report appeals to the evidence produced from the regional groups on each topic under review, making reference both to written papers and to the oral contribution of participants in the round-table discussions. In this way, the reader of the report may gain a glimpse of the shape which is taken by Christian faith and life in different parts of the world today, as well as in different expressions of the Christian church. However, the content has not been *arranged* in a regional or geographical way. Themes which have emerged from the conversations have been chosen as the structure for the material, and this in turn has allowed for theological reflection throughout the account.
2. This element of theological reflection means that this account is more than descriptive. From time to time suggestions are made about ways in which further agreement might be possible between the two communions, though these suggestions are not presented formally as proposals. In a later part of the report, moreover, each section of this account is supplemented by questions addressed to Anglicans or Baptists, or to both. The Continuation Committee which has been responsible for the compiling of the report hopes that these questions will provoke reaction and further thought.

The Importance of Continuity: or, what is the story of the church in which we live?

Continuity in the English Church

3. As Anglicans and Baptists met, they found that the natural place to begin was not with a comparison of beliefs and views, but with a telling of the story of their life over the years as Christian churches. This was not just anecdotal, but theological. How had they been a continuing manifestation of the people of God over the generations? How were they an enduring part of the body of Christ in space and time? In the European phase, meeting on the site of the medieval cathedral in Norwich and sharing in its worship, the Anglican sense of continuity with the earlier church in the western world was strong. As one participant (from the evangelical wing of the Church of England) put it: ‘the Church of England is the Catholic Church in this country... it is simply the ongoing tradition of the Christian faith, having undergone some pruning and reappropriation of apostolicity thanks to the Reformers.’⁴ As another Anglican contributor put it, ‘the Church of England is... the national church of the English people... what happened in the sixteenth century was not the initiation of a new church, but precisely the reformation of an existing one’.⁵ Anglicans trace this continuity with the earlier church through liturgy, spirituality, creeds and ministry. The last element takes the form of the ‘historic episcopate’, which in current understanding should not, however, be simply equated with ‘apostolic succession’. There is now widespread agreement between Christian churches that succession from the Apostles belongs to the whole community which lives by the faith of the gospel. A succession of ordination through a historic line of bishops offers, for Anglicans, a God-given *sign* of standing in continuity with the apostolic tradition, even if this is not regarded as a literally unbroken chain.
4. Mindful of its continuity with the earlier English church, the Church of England (as the first participant quoted above observed), ‘has tried hard not to be a denomination, [but rather] to exist as the church of the people of England for the people of England.’ This is an attractive portrayal of a church that simply wants to serve the people, and it is offered with an intention of humility. It does, however, produce some problems for those who are not Anglicans, and especially for Baptists who are also children of the European Reformation. It was pointed out at Norwich that English Baptists affirm that they are, like the Church of England,

part of the One, Holy, Catholic [i.e. universal] and Apostolic Church which has experienced some ‘pruning’ and reforming. In their beginnings as Separatists in the early years of the seventeenth century they believed that they were stepping into the continuity of covenant partnership between God and his church in England, and since then they have understood themselves to have been serving English society as an alternative stream of faith and witness alongside that of the church established by law. They too try to be churches ‘for the people of England’. Even if Baptists are regarded by Anglicans as lacking an important *sign* of continuity in not having a ‘historic episcopate’, it should not be forgotten that a kind of continuity nevertheless exists.

Continuity through the English Church

5. So far this seems, however, to be a very English debate and a very English story. What happens when it is transferred onto the world stage? What happens to the issue of continuity when the context is that of the Baptist World Alliance and the Anglican Communion worldwide, with all their diverse participants and different cultures? The meeting in Myanmar (Burma) provided one opportunity for testing this out, from the perspective of Asian Christianity. The presentation of the representatives from the Anglican Church of the Province of Myanmar began:

We Anglicans in Myanmar trace our root back to the early church of the apostolic age... we also trace our identity to the reformation of the Church of England... up to the time of reformation the Church in England existed as part of the western church union under the Pope of Rome...⁶

This is, on the face of it, a story held in common with the Church of England. That is, Myanmar Anglicans trace their heritage as being that of the earliest church, developing into the Catholic Church in the West, and then being reformed and continuing in the form of the Church of England. A little later in their document, the Myanmar Anglicans explain that they regard the reformed western church as having continued in three streams - ‘the *Lutheran* in Germany and Scandinavia, the *Calvinists* in Switzerland, Scotland and Holland, and *Anglican* in England’.⁷ Because of the colonial rule of Great Britain and associated missionary activity, they stand in the third stream. They are indebted, through the circumstances of history, to the Church of England for providing them with a form of ‘Reformed Catholicism’, so that they can stand in the heritage of the one catholic or universal church which has

Themes of the Conversations

passed through the purging fires of reformation. A paper by an Anglican representative from the Province of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui showed an even stronger view of continuity with the western church as mediated through British life, beginning thus:

The Anglican Communion originated from early centuries when Celtic Christians began their work in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales....⁸

Similarly, Anglican participants in the Latin American conversations traced their heritage back to the earliest centuries of Christian life in England, regarding the Anglican Church as 'historic, reformed and biblical'; they affirmed their identity as 'Catholic and Protestant', taking their part in a story which began long before the Reformation in England, but which is still indebted to renewal at the time of the Reformation.⁹

Continuity with the New Testament Church

6. What of *Baptists* in the world outside Britain? For them, the 'English question' seems much less relevant. Some Baptists in Europe will want to point out that there are not just *three* streams of the reformed western church as identified above - there is a fourth stream of the continuing catholic church, that of Christian communities which experienced a more 'radical reformation', separating the church from the civil power, stressing the covenant privileges of the local congregation, gathered under the rule of Christ, and abandoning the existing system of oversight through bishops. Churches which still survive in this stream of Christianity carry names such as Mennonite, Baptist and Congregationalist. But many (perhaps most) Baptists beyond Europe have little interest in recalling this kind of story. This is partly because some of them trace their immediate origins to missionary work from the United States and other countries at a later period. But more significantly, they believe themselves to stand in continuity with the apostolic tradition on the grounds that the form of their congregational life *directly* reflects the situation of the earliest church, without worrying about the intervening years. The representatives of the Myanmar Baptists, for instance, presented their 'Baptist heritage' by speaking of Baptist beliefs which are rooted in the Bible, especially the baptism of believers, and which express 'what it means to live biblically as one in Jesus Christ in spite of our ethnic consciousness.'¹⁰ A Baptist contributor in the North American round similarly noted the sense among Baptists that they have

a 'continuity in the gospel with the churches of the Apostles'; for Baptists it is when they 'are faithful to gospel imperatives and primitive church order' that they feel they are maintaining continuity with the church that has gone before them.¹¹

Other kinds of continuity in community

7. There are, however, modes of continuity among Baptists which come close to the regard for the rôle of tradition in Anglicanism. Baptists in Europe, for example, will certainly think in the first place of a life which is continuous with that of the earliest communities as reflected in the pages of the New Testament; but many also have an interest in the heritage of a particular congregation, as recorded in its church minute book, and in stories of individual heroes of faith from the past. There is an urgent need to establish this latter tradition in some parts of Eastern Europe today, such as Russia, Bulgaria and Georgia, where Baptist faith is perceived by some as being associated with recently imported 'foreign cults', and Baptists may be accused of not being true citizens of their country; here it is important to show that Baptist life is truly part of the culture of the society. There is also a form of continuity through organizations and institutions, especially in Britain and North America; voluntary societies for mission, education, Bible publishing and social reforms provide a continuing identity through the years with which congregations will align themselves. Particularly evident in the North American experience is 'a subtle form of continuity through identification with a particular theological college or seminary'.¹²
8. It seems important to Baptists outside Britain to recall the long tradition among Baptists of striving for religious liberty and freedom of conscience generally, a struggle which began in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹³ One Baptist participant in the Latin American round of conversations, from Brazil, affirmed that 'we defend the identity which makes us know whence we came, who we are and where we go',¹⁴ locating the beginning of this path in the English Reformation and in English Puritanism. But the period of the church's story between the New Testament and the Reformation seems to be of less interest to Baptists. One exception is in the rare places where Baptists now subscribe to so-called 'Landmarkism' or 'Successionism', which postulates an unbroken succession (a 'kingdom') of local congregations of a Baptist type since the first century. Once a highly influential theory among Southern Baptists in the USA, this has now largely lost its fasci-

Themes of the Conversations

nation. But owing to the influence of the first Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil the theory is still prevalent in that country, and though rejected by most Baptist scholars there, as elsewhere,¹⁵ it has had an inhibiting and even disastrous effect on inter-church co-operation.

A two-fold continuity

9. In short, both Baptists and Anglicans have a twofold sense of continuity - directly with the church of the New Testament (Scripture), and with the story of the catholic church through the ages (tradition) - but the emphasis differs in the two communions. Anglicanism, with an identity marked by the threefold sources of Scripture, reason and tradition certainly gives priority to Scripture, and it was pointed out in the Caribbean that a hallmark of Anglican worship is the frequency with which Scripture is read;¹⁶ but the tradition of the church, together with the employment of reason within a particular culture, is explicitly allowed its place in interpretation of Scripture.¹⁷ Baptists tend to concentrate their claims on the first kind of continuity, amounting even to a sense of direct engagement in the life of the New Testament church, and to underplay the second. Baptists, however, often fail to notice how dependent they are on formulations of doctrine made in the period of the Church Fathers, and how they also make place for the rôles of reason and experience, a phenomenon which is given further attention later in this report.

Continuity and ancestors in the faith

10. In the round of conversations in Kenya the double story of the church took on a new form, shaped by the African honouring of the ancestor as a still 'living' member of the community. In the first place, this applies to the story of the church through the ages. There is a strong sense of connection in both communions with the former preachers and martyrs of the faith in Africa in relatively modern times, whether European missionaries, freed slaves from the USA and the Caribbean or African converts. As in other regional conversations, Anglicans tend to have a clearer sense than Baptists of the 'ancestors in the faith' before the coming of either Anglican or Baptist missions to their country, but both are anxious to recall and celebrate African saints of all ages and all denominations, as a vital part of the present community of faith. Baptists in Africa thus seem to have a stronger sense of tradition than Baptists in either Europe or Asia. In the second place there is continuity with the world of the Scriptures. Both communions have a vivid awareness of direct continuity with the communities of faith of Ancient Israel and the earliest

Christian church. The world-view of the Bible is felt to be close to the African one, and many of its presuppositions about the way that God relates to the world seem to be familiar. As one Baptist participant (from Ghana) put it, there is a 'redemptive dialogue between the biblical and African world-view' and 'by reading the Bible in my own mother-tongue I get affirmation of my own cultural values.' The people of Israel and the early disciples are thus recognized as 'ancestors' through a line of descent which is simply African. This line of ancestry is supported by the early connections between North Africa/Egypt and figures in both Jewish and Christian heritage (Moses, Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine), but there is a direct sense of the 'African' roots in the biblical story beyond actual historical connections. As an Anglican participant from Ghana expressed it, 'I walk back to the Bible in two ways - through the missionaries and through traditional religion.' The same participant drew attention to the work of African women theologians in reflecting creatively on the African woman's life with God in the context of African culture.¹⁸ A Baptist participant from Zimbabwe remarked that 'in the matter of continuity, we have often ignored the richness of traditional African spiritual culture. We need to understand that we are embedded in African insights'.¹⁹ Some of those present in the conversations would like to have had opportunity to explore more thoroughly the question of which areas in traditional African culture and religion are felt to be helpful to Christian discipleship, and why. Participants from the West thought that they needed to be helped in understanding this particular Christian world-view.

11. Respect for 'ancestors in the faith' accounts for the continuing sense of affection among African churches towards the missionary agencies (not only from Great Britain but also from such other countries as the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Sweden). This seems to colour the Anglican valuing of connection with Canterbury, although there is also a sense of having inherited a 'sacramental' tradition of priesthood and eucharist from the Anglican position in the Reformation. But, at the same time, there is considerable criticism of the present relation between the western mission agencies and western churches on the one hand, and African churches on the other. For all the new language of partnership, African churches feel they are treated as the 'junior partner', and that the situation will not change as long as there is economic inequality.

Themes of the Conversations

Continuity in a post-colonial world

12. The question, raised in Africa, of finding identity in the situation of post-colonialism, took on an even more obvious form in the Caribbean. The Anglican view of continuity there paid due attention to inheritance from the Christian church in the West. But at least a slight distancing from the Church in England was apparent. Quoting the formula that the Province of the West Indies maintains the faith, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, ‘*according as the Church of England has received the same*’, presentations laid stress on debt to the tradition and episcopacy of the western church in general,²⁰ and to the importance of the Prayer Book in holding together the many strands of Anglican identity. Although one of the Anglican participants in the Latin American round of conversations had stated that ‘Anglicanism can no longer be defined by the Church of England’, in the West Indies there was an even stronger sense of unease in being identified with what had been the established church of the oppressors in the period of slavery, as well as the church of the colonial masters for some time afterwards. One telling example given was the need today to adapt civil family law for the culture of the Caribbean, rather than simply to reproduce the received English concept of ‘the nuclear family’ which is still reflected in the view of the family within the Anglican Province of the West Indies.²¹ For all that, however, there was admitted to be a perception that to be ‘Anglican’ is to be more ‘anglicized’ (and middle class) than is true among Baptists.²² There was a readiness for Anglicans to give credit to the Baptists and other nonconformist groups for being the earliest to provide pastoral care and education to the slave population and ‘labouring classes’, though there was also recollection of Anglican involvement in the amelioration of the conditions of the slaves from 1823 onwards.²³
13. Pleas for a programme of contextualization in a post-colonial era came from both the Anglican and Baptist representatives, but there was a particular stress here from Baptists from Jamaica. They made the emphatic statement that such a programme is not an option for the interpreters of the Gospel in the Caribbean, and that the plurality of Caribbean theologies, matching the diversity of cultures, must be marked by the theme of liberation.²⁴ Contextualization, it was affirmed, involves facing up to the facts of history - including the experience of slavery and oppression - without shame. Jamaican Baptist representatives, though having generally good memories of the Baptist Missionary Society and the involve-

ment of its missionaries in working for emancipation of slaves, refused to speak of being 'influenced' by English Baptists, insisting on their own Jamaican and Caribbean identity. However, there was perceived to be a danger of 'religious re-colonization' in parts of the West Indies, and especially a new dependency of Baptist churches in the Bahamas on Baptist conventions in the USA.²⁵ The challenge for both Anglicans and Baptists is, then, how to foster a new identity in a post-colonial situation. For Anglicans this takes the form of seeking emancipation from an unsuitable English frame of mind while remaining conscious of the English origins of their orders of ministry and liturgy, and of the position of Canterbury as the senior see within a collegiate episcopacy. Baptists are less burdened by issues of succession, but perhaps more open to the dangers of becoming dependent on a powerful and wealthy neighbour in the present. It should be added that in Latin America there were also signs of a new dependency among Anglicans, with the comment that - due to extreme poverty among the people - there would be economic reliance for at least the next half-century on the Episcopal Church of the USA.

14. Participants in the conversations in the African and Caribbean rounds - both Anglican and Baptist - showed the strongest evidence of efforts towards contextualization of theology among all the regions visited. However, in the Asian round one Anglican participant from Korea urged the need to 'pay attention to the Asian spirit' and 'to listen to Asian people's desires and prayers'. This has to a degree been carefully nurtured in some Asian Anglican dioceses (for example in Kurunegala, Sri Lanka) and among some Asian Baptist churches (for example in Nagaland and Mizoram, India), so that the process of the indigenization of worship and liturgy continues to evolve in interesting and fruitful ways.

Continuity and culture

15. Conversations in North America brought to mind that this region offers the example of an earlier 'post-colonial experience' for both Baptists and Anglicans. It also offers an instance of the way that a powerful culture (the 'American way') can shape the form that continuity takes. Several participants drew attention to the phrase of Martin Marty, 'the Baptistification of America'²⁶ as a phenomenon applying to all Christian churches, namely the belief that individual church members should have substantial input into everything in the life of the church. Perhaps

Themes of the Conversations

uniquely, Anglicans and Baptists had common roots in ecclesiastical polity in the colonial situation, since pre-revolutionary Anglicanism was effectively without bishops (though nominally under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London) and essentially congregational,²⁷ with strong contribution from lay members through the ‘vestry’ principle of government. As one Anglican participant put it, ‘the home country steadfastly refused to provide leadership, so Anglicans in their new local situation were forced to do their own thing’. Baptists and Anglicans, for all their differences, also had a common experience of winning independence from a colonial situation, and were shaped by an individualism which was partly fostered by Enlightenment ideology and partly by the necessary self-sufficiency of the frontier situation. One Anglican contributor stressed the desire of American Anglicans to stand in the continuity of liturgy, spirituality and ministry from the English Church (bishops were finally consecrated for North America in 1786-7), while at the same time ‘these elements were adapted to the political, religious and social circumstances of the new country’.²⁸ Other Anglican participants put this ‘adaptation’ more strongly, even regarding it as a determination to establish an Anglican identity which was distinct from that of the Church of England.

16. The development of Baptist life in the United States was perhaps even more strongly marked by individualism. Continuity with an ecclesiology based on the rule of Christ, as inherited from English Baptist life, was not entirely lost, but came to be absorbed into the cultural values of the new America. As one Baptist contributor reflected, ‘In this heady environment of freedom and self-sufficiency, fortified by advances in technology and wealth, the Baptists were successful in establishing self-governing congregations. Local Baptists practised a form of democratic government which correlated to a great extent with the forms of government common in the American hinterland.’²⁹ The original understanding of the church as a Christologically-governed congregation was submerged in a new ecclesiastical functionalism, and in an emphasis on the total spiritual ‘competency’ of the individual without relation to the community of faith.³⁰ Reflecting on similarities between the Anglican and Baptist stories in North America and on the undoubted achievement of both groups in communicating the gospel message within their culture, participants reflected that both have achieved a kind of ‘establishment status’ in a situation where there is no legally established church; the question was thus raised as to how the churches might more

effectively make room for those who have no established place in society.

17. The contemporary culture, often called ‘post-modern’, presents a challenge of a different kind to Anglicans and Baptists alike. How is it possible to maintain a continuity of the faith in a situation of relativism, where fixed values of all kinds are regarded as cultural constructions, and in which there is less confidence about the power of the individual self to create a world in which these values are respected? Participants in the North American conversations observed that there was a danger of a search for a merely human security. One contributor noted that North American Anglicans and Baptists seem curiously to have adopted the less adventurous features of each other’s positions. On the one hand, Anglicans have recently tended to resort to the kind of use of Scripture of which Baptists have (often wrongly) been accused - namely the treatment of the text as a rational system of instructions without sufficient relation of Scripture to the revelation of God in Christ. On the other hand, some Baptists have recently required ministers and teachers to subscribe to written statements of doctrinal beliefs as a condition of employment; while this is intended to clarify doctrinal truth, the result can be to use a creed or confession as an instrument of exclusion.³¹ There was general agreement among participants that there was a need to recapture the risks of faith - trust in Christ and trust in each others’ good faith before Christ.

Confessing the Faith

The assumption of a common faith

18. A Baptist representative from Australia at Yangon remarked that ‘Baptists have always insisted that they share the fundamental beliefs of the many branches of the world-wide Christian church. They become uneasy about references to ‘Baptist doctrine’ or ‘Baptist theology’.³² A Brazilian Baptist in Santiago rejected the very concept of ‘Baptist doctrines’: there are, he affirmed, only Christian and biblical *doctrines*, while there are Baptist principles and practices.³³ Perhaps this is why the regional meetings devoted little time to the second stated aim of the conversations, ‘to share with each other our understanding of the faith and to work towards a common confession of the apostolic faith.’ This may well have been assumed to be common ground. However, in every round of conversations, and most forcibly in Latin America, the desire was expressed for Baptists and Anglicans to take every opportunity to

Themes of the Conversations

confess publicly together their common faith, so that 'the world may see a united and harmonious witness.'

Creeds and Confessions

19. For doctrinal standards, the Canons of the Church of England point first to the Scriptures and, under them, to the 'Catholic Creeds' and other such teaching of the Fathers and councils of the ancient church as are 'agreeable to the Scriptures'. The Church of England also regards its own historic formularies - namely the 'Thirty Nine Articles of Religion', the Book of Common Prayer (1672) and the 'Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons' - as trustworthy witness to the gospel.³⁴ Anglicans confess the apostolic faith in a liturgical way, preserving from the older catholic church in the West and East the recitation in worship of the Apostles' Creed and the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople. Subordinate to these authorities are various recent statements of doctrine that have been endorsed by Anglican synods and councils as being in agreement with the faith of Anglicans; these statements have often arisen out of ecumenical dialogue (for example the 'Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral' of 1888). Each province in the Anglican Communion draws from the same list of authorities for the making of doctrine.
20. In modern times, Baptists have characteristically refused to bind themselves to creeds, appealing to the authority of Scripture as sufficient witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But historically they have not been reluctant to compile 'confessions' for use in teaching, for making clear the basis on which they covenant together, and for explaining their belief and practice to those outside Baptist communities. It was reported in the Latin American conversations, for example, that a Baptist confession of faith had recently been presented to the Government of Chile under a change of law that gave freedom of religion to all denominations whose registration was accepted by the state. British Baptists (outside Northern Ireland) have not had a confession of faith since the eighteenth century, making do with a brief three-point 'Declaration of Principle'. This affirms: (a) the final authority of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures and the liberty of the local church to interpret the 'laws' of Christ; (b) the nature of baptism, and (c) the duty of all Christian disciples to engage in mission. In this brevity, however, British Baptists are exceptional among all other Baptist groups in the modern world.
21. The distinction for Baptists between creeds and confessions is not an absolute one, and the issue seems to be more about the way that state-

ments of faith are *used*. In Baptist confessions of the past and present the major creeds and statements of the world-wide church have in fact often been explicitly acknowledged. A confession of a group of English General Baptist churches in 1678, for instance, explicitly affirms that the Creed of Nicaea and the so-called Athanasian Creed are to be 'received' and 'believed' and 'taught by the ministers of Christ'.³⁵ Generally, moreover, the ordering of the early Baptist confessions follows the shape of the creeds, and their doctrinal formulations show credal influence, even to the extent of particular wording.³⁶ In the later twentieth century the German-language Baptist confession used in Germany, Austria and Switzerland declares that 'it presupposes the Apostles' Creed as a common confession of Christendom'³⁷, and the Norwegian Baptists in their confession have affirmed 'the content' of both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed.³⁸ A 'model' covenant service, recently produced by the Baptist Union of Great Britain for use in churches in 2001, provides in its main text the alternatives of a selection of Scripture verses and the Apostles' Creed as a means of confessing the Christian faith, and includes the Nicene Creed in further resources. It is also worth recalling that at the First Baptist World Congress on July 12, 1905, all the Baptists attending stood voluntarily and recited the Apostles' Creed, 'as a simple acknowledgement of where we stand and what we believe.'³⁹ The ambivalence of Baptist attitudes towards creeds, however, was demonstrated in the Caribbean round of conversations. While a participant from the Bahamas believed that the adoption of creeds as authoritative tends to give them a greater importance than the Scriptures from which they are derived, and that creeds suppress individual freedom to interpret the Scriptures with the aid only of the Spirit,⁴⁰ a Baptist from Jamaica reported that some Baptist churches in his country include the recitation of the Apostles' Creed in baptismal services, as a way for all to renew their baptismal vows. The point was also made by Baptist participants from the same region that the Spirit interprets Scripture in the midst of the community, not only in the hearts of individuals, and the whole community of the church is wider than Baptists alone. Despite varying attitudes, we may conclude from these conversations that there is more common ground between Baptists and Anglicans in appeal to the historic creeds than is often supposed; there is certainly no disagreement about the *content* of the creeds.

22. The Baptist participants in the European phase at Norwich had no common confession of faith in use among European Baptists to offer, but

one paper did record a study document of the European Baptist Federation which had gained wide consent and use. This begins with the statement, *We are part of the whole, world-wide Christian Church and we confess faith in One God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, and the following summary of beliefs was included in the note of explanation:

Holding faith in the triune God, Baptists share basic beliefs with other Christian churches, including: God's work as Creator; the fallen nature of human beings; the perfect humanity and deity of Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in a human person; redemption through the life, atoning death and resurrection of Christ; the transforming of personal and social life by the power of the Holy Spirit; and the final fulfilment of God's purposes.⁴¹

The credal shape of this summary is obvious. What Baptists often overlook in such an affirmation of 'basic doctrines', however, is the doctrinal centrality of the nature of ecclesiology to churches who stand in the Roman, Orthodox and 'Reformed Catholic' tradition. Modern Baptists will often view the doctrine of the church (including ministry and sacraments) as something 'additional' to the 'fundamentals of the faith', and while acknowledging that what it means to be distinctively Baptist lies in this area, they are often surprised by the dislocation with other traditions that it seems to open up. At Yangon it was instructive to find that the Baptist Convention in Myanmar has a list of 'Baptist Beliefs and Distinctives' which combines doctrinal and church order issues, and that they believe these not only 'enhance the solidarity of Baptist churches' but also 'provide us with the awareness of the spirit of ecumenism, deepening *koinonia*.'⁴² They also, we should note, affirm the ecumenical agreed statement *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*⁴³ as 'a matter of our faith as well as our order'.

Interpreting the faith

23. Confessing the apostolic faith also includes interpreting it faithfully for the contemporary world. As an example, the African conversations mentioned Christology as 'one of the most challenging areas' for the church in its doctrinal teaching in an African context. Both Anglican and Baptist representatives explained that it is easier for an African to identify Christ as mediator between humanity and the supreme God than as 'the second person' in the Trinity. One Baptist theologian commented that 'when African men and women pray through Jesus Christ, they are in the same mood that they were when praying through their ancestors', and another

er added that Christ could be seen as the 'supreme ancestor' in making it possible to by-pass the hierarchies of ancestors who bridge the material and the spiritual world. An Anglican bishop pointed out that in the Gospel portrayal of Jesus the African would recognize, in human terms, features of the *Inanga* ('medicine-man'). Confession of the faith in a way that is faithful to Scripture and tradition is clearly more than adoption of ancient formularies, and cannot be separated from contextualization.

24. Many times in the conversations mention was made of the tolerance and latitude of Anglicans, as a 'middle way', in holding together different interpretations of Scripture. There was some characterization of the Anglican ethos as that of openness and acceptance, particularly between those of catholic and evangelical convictions. Baptists too pointed out that they offered a broad umbrella for diversity, stemming from difference in context, freedom of interpretation of the Scripture under the inspiration of the Spirit, and the liberty under Christ of the local church. Baptists, wrote one from the Bahamas, have 'agreed to disagree' about a whole range of issues, including the role of the Holy Spirit in the church, the ministry of women, openness of church membership, and the eternal security of the believer.⁴⁴ Both Anglicans and Baptists felt that, while they needed to be sensitive to the prophetic word of dissent, boundaries for diversity were nevertheless offered by the corporate mind of the church in its gathering together, at local and at synodical or convention level.

Sources of authority

25. The regional meeting in North America provided a special opportunity to sum up the approaches of Anglicans and Baptists to sources of authority in affirming the Christian faith and determining Christian practice. There was complete agreement that final authority belonged to Jesus Christ, as head of the church and as the revelation of the triune God. There was also agreement that among the sources of authority which witness to Christ and are subordinate to him, the Holy Scriptures - inspired by the Spirit of God - take primary place as the ultimate written standard for faith and practice.⁴⁵ Article 6 of the Thirty-Nine Articles concurs with many Baptist confessions in speaking of the 'sufficiency' of the Scriptures for salvation.
26. But Scripture needs to be interpreted in each age, and at this point there appear differences, at least in emphasis. Anglicans place tradition and

reason alongside (but secondary to) Scripture, while - for the right understanding of Scripture - Baptists will appeal to the illuminating work of the Spirit within the mind of the individual believer and within the corporate mind of the church meeting. While Baptists often claim that their approach amounts to affirming 'Scripture alone', it appears that there is actually a considerable overlap between the two approaches. 'Reason' within the Anglican triad is not, suggested the Anglican participants, to be best understood as 'the mind of the culture in which the church lives' (despite this definition in the Virginia Report, 1997), but rather as the 'mind of the church' - that is, the thinking of human minds transformed by the grace of God, though always contextualized in human culture. This brings the Anglican 'reason' close to the enlightened conscience of the believer and the mind of the church meeting as understood by Baptists. The Baptist participants for their part recognized that interpretation of Scripture by individuals and the fellowship was inevitably shaped by the tradition of the church (see above paragraphs 7-9). In particular, the debt to the doctrinal concepts of the Church Fathers with regard to Trinity and Christology, as evidenced in Baptist confessions, means that it would be more accurate to regard the Baptist view of Scripture as *suprema scriptura* rather than *sola scriptura*. One Baptist contributor thus noted a 'growing recognition in Baptist theology that biblical authority always exists and functions in relationship to other sources of authority that inform the community's interpretation and practice of the biblical story'.⁴⁶

Mission and Ministry

Two models of mission

27. In the first round of conversations in Norwich, it was observed that there was a widespread perception that Baptists are more committed to evangelism than Anglicans. Similarly, a paper from the Anglican delegation in Nairobi made the comment that 'obviously the Anglicans have little culture of evangelism' compared with the Baptists,⁴⁷ and curiously exactly the same comment was made by Anglicans in Yangon, adding that 'Anglicans are more prone to be priests than evangelists'. In Norwich this perception was given some examination, and it was thought that it was helpful to look at the situation in a different way, from the perspective of various models of *mission*. In the context of the life of the UK at least, two models of mission could be discerned, to *both* of which *both* communions are committed, but with different emphases.

There is first the model of mission which sees it as inseparable from spiritual and pastoral care for those within the boundaries of the church community. Second, there is the model of mission as going out from the community to minister in a secular and non-Christian society. The practice of infant baptism, the position of the established church and the nature of the parish system leads the Church of England to see the scope of its borders as being very wide, and so to lay more emphasis on the first type of mission than Baptists do (see also below on membership). Baptist churches, viewing baptism as a commissioning of adult disciples to service in the world, tend to lay more stress on the second type, with the consequence of giving a higher profile to evangelism as proclaiming good news in Jesus Christ.

28. In the first approach, a mission-field is created within the area of the church; in the second, disciples enter a mission-field outside the church. This difference of emphasis appears to persist elsewhere in the world outside England, despite lack of establishment. One of the Anglican participants in the West Indies commented that evangelism by Baptists seemed to be ‘external and visible in secular society’, where Anglican evangelism was seen ‘as a form of pastoral care’.⁴⁸ Only in the conversations in Latin America was it impossible to discern this difference; instead a distinction was drawn by both Anglicans and Baptists between evangelism as conducted by Protestants and ‘evangelization’ by Roman Catholics. A Chilean bishop distinguished between ‘evangelism seeking faith response’ (Protestant) and evangelism seeking the affiliation of a community to faith (Roman Catholic).⁴⁹ If Baptists tend to stress the model of a mission field outside the church, it should also be noted that they have developed ways to open up the boundaries of the Christian community to those who have no clear Christian faith as yet; it was, for example, remarked in the African conversations that at the time of crisis of death, Baptists in Kenya will perform burial rites for those who either have no church or who have been ‘rejected by their own churches for various reasons.’⁵⁰ At the other end of life, it was pointed out in the Latin American conversations that the blessing of infants is practised throughout the area by Baptists, and used as an opportunity to bring families into the orbit of the church fellowship.

Holistic mission

29. It is misleading to equate these two models of mission with ‘social service’ and ‘preaching the gospel’ respectively; *both* models have a place

Themes of the Conversations

for the whole range of mission, including various forms of service to others and the proclamation of the message of salvation. In differing circumstances the elements of proclamation and service may stand out in particular ways; in the UK, for example, the place of the Anglican Church in English society tends to give it a higher profile in issues of social justice and welfare, and may give it more opportunities to enter into dialogue with the governing authorities on questions of social morality. On the other hand, the indigenization of Baptist churches throughout Europe has given them more opportunities than Anglicans to be involved in relief work in situations of economic deprivation in the former eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia. Both communions have been recently involved in taking up the cause of immigrants and refugees in the UK. Some Baptist conventions, notably that of the Southern Baptists, want to reserve the *term* 'missions' to proclamation of the gospel,⁵¹ but these too are actually involved in providing a range of social services and in seeking to alleviate world hunger as a matter of Christian responsibility.

30. Given the commitment of both communions to mission which includes proclamation of the gospel and Christian social service, it is interesting that both Anglican and Baptist representatives in the African round of conversations felt that past missionaries had failed to carry through a holistic kind of mission. They believe that they have been left with a heritage which is more concerned for the individual soul than for the corporate and bodily being of persons. They see the African emphasis on the church as a 'community for the promotion of life' as a distinctive quality over against their sponsoring churches: 'a sense of the wholeness of the person is manifest in the African attitude to life. Just as there is no separation between the sacred and secular in communal life neither is there separation between the soul and the body.'⁵² An Anglican participant defined the ministry of the church as the serving of those who suffer, and the speaking a word of prophetic protest against injustice. A Baptist participant recalled that the purpose of the All Africa Baptist Fellowship was an 'evangelistic programme to win Africa for Christ', and here he was reflecting the widespread African Baptist emphasis on proclamation, discipleship and nurture in the faith; but he also stressed that this programme should include 'priestly care of the environment' and a radical discipleship that 'relates to issues of human development'.⁵³ Both groups felt that they were inhibited at times by the hesitations of their western partners in making a prophetic critique of society.

31. The same stress on the holistic nature of mission was seen in conversations in Latin America and the Caribbean, though criticism of western missionaries only emerged explicitly in the latter. No difference could be traced between Baptists and Anglicans in either of the two areas in their view of the scope of mission; declaration of the gospel by word must be accompanied by working for social transformation and the struggle for justice. Both Anglicans and Baptists were more ready to speak openly of theologies of liberation and emancipation in the West Indies, where both were more reserved about this *terminology* in Latin America, tending to associate it with Roman Catholicism. One Brazilian Anglican remarked that members of his church saw Jesus 'more as a captive than a liberator.'⁵⁴ But much of the substance of liberation theology was present, even if the participants did not use such phrases as 'evangelism of the poor by the poor', and 'God's option for the poor' such as appeared explicitly in the presentations from the Caribbean.⁵⁵ A Baptist from Argentina insisted that evangelism was personal but never private, and that evangelism as 'joyful witness to the redeeming love of God' could never be separated from social responsibility in mission. An Anglican contributor from Guatemala pointed out that Jesus' aim for us to have 'life in abundance' could not be restricted to spiritual abundance, but that it had economic and social implications. Both Anglicans and Baptists spoke of participating in the mission of God rather than in human 'missions'. 'Evangelism follows God's will, not ours' commented an Anglican, so that it 'means implementing God's vision';⁵⁶ a Baptist urged that 'the churches lose effectiveness and content when they do not discover the accomplishment of the mission of God in the world and outside them'. Thus, mission is nothing less than 'the adoration of the self-manifestation of the triune God in history'.⁵⁷ In the Caribbean conversations, an Anglican contributor drew the conclusion for worship, that in the liturgy worshippers can know the realities of mission, entering into the 'drama of the salvation of the world, revisioning lives'.⁵⁸
32. The African critique of missionary theology was echoed in presentations from the Caribbean, with particular reference to the institution of slavery. One paper, analysing that situation, found that a false dichotomy was created in missionary preaching between the body and the spirit, and that an individual appropriation of personal salvation was taught in order to prevent the creation of what was perceived as a dangerous sense of community and solidarity among slaves.⁵⁹ The present context is a traumatic period of transition, politically, culturally, economically and

Themes of the Conversations

religiously. There is a deliberate movement from a dominant western culture to a variety of cultural identities, including a pervasive African identity which was previously suppressed, and both Anglicans and Baptists clearly see the task of mission in that context. The context in South America is similarly one of convulsive political and socio-economic upheaval, calling for a vision of the Kingdom of God and holistic mission. But the churches there also view mission in the context of a turmoil which is religious and ecclesial. Both Baptists and Anglicans are concerned about the rise of independent religious groups which occupy the extreme end of a Pentecostal spectrum and which are even New Age in character. This is coincidental with the rapid and massive decline of the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church. The new Christian groups have a proactive approach to promoting the faith, including use of modern media and a widespread use of 'cultural symbols'; neither Anglicans nor Baptists seem to be interesting in copying their approaches, but realise that they cannot be entirely content with past methods. Baptists and Anglicans regard this double situation of rapid political and religious change as also calling for stronger mutual recognition between themselves (see also paragraph 88).

33. In the North American phase of conversations it was observed that churches of the various African-American Baptist conventions are far more overtly political than their white counterparts. The pastor is understood as having a particular role as a spokesperson for social justice as well as the proclaimer of a gospel of spiritual salvation, and this sometimes involves both pastor and church explicitly in political matters.⁶⁰ Martin Luther King Jr (who was also a pastor within the American Baptist Convention) was one who stood in this tradition as an opponent of racism and advocate of non-violent social change.

Mission and Church Growth

34. Both Anglicans and Baptists in Latin America affirmed that mission must have depth (maturity) as well as breadth (statistical expansion), and that the growth of the church must never be mere expansion but contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of God.⁶¹ Growth in numbers is to be sought and welcomed, as long as it is accompanied by depth of discipleship.

Mission and dialogue

35. While need for dialogue with other faiths was mentioned in the African round of talks, particularly with regard to Muslims, it was a much more

marked feature of the conversations in Asia. It was stressed that such dialogue should be marked by: (a) sensitivity, respect and courtesy, with a genuine listening to the other; (b) the aim of being able to *tell* our own Christian story better as a result of dialogue; and (c) the aim of *understanding* our own story better for ourselves through listening to others. It was thought that relations and theological conversations between the Christian churches should provide a model and incentive for wider dialogue beyond the churches. In general, issues of holistic mission and inter-faith dialogue were not perceived to divide Anglicans and Baptists in either Asia or Africa. With regard to the holistic nature of mission, a contributor from South Africa remarked that in that area political views were ‘largely determined by race’ rather than by denomination or theology.⁶²

Ministry and mission

36. While Baptists affirm the ‘priesthood of all believers’, Anglicans intend the same thing by the term ‘the royal priesthood of all the baptized’. The phrases derive from 1 Peter 2:9, ‘You are a royal priesthood’, in a letter which is much concerned with the life of newly baptized believers. Both communions encourage all their members to use their spiritual gifts in sharing in God’s mission in the world, in obedience to the ‘Great Commission’ (Matt. 28:19-20), while believing that there is still a God-given office of ministry to which only some are called. Both Anglicans and Baptists use the word ‘ministry’ in a double sense to cover the vocations of both people and pastors, while Anglicans also use the word ‘priesthood’ in a similar dual way. For Baptists there are different expressions of *ministry*, while ‘priesthood’ is ascribed only to the whole body of believers; for Anglicans, there are also different expressions of *priesthood* among the lay and the ordained. Different vocabularies should not obscure the common underlying ground. However, the feeling was expressed in these conversations that Baptists have more practical scope to express the ministry, and hence a sharing in mission, of all the members of the church. Some Anglican participants in the African round thought that the demarcation of the ordained through western liturgical vestments and a hierarchy of ‘priestly’ ministry led to a passivity in church members. One African Anglican paper proposed, in a way similar to Baptist thought, that:

Baptism is the essential opening to ministry in the church. The Christian is not baptized into a passive group of spectators, but into

Themes of the Conversations

action, into church, and also into service. The nature of the church is a community of disciples, with the participation of all members in all things.⁶³

In the light of this, Baptists drew attention to what they saw as an inherent connection between the baptism of professing disciples and the commissioning of a whole priestly people to service in the world. On the other hand, African Anglican participants stressed the value of having received the heritage of an ordained ministry marked by the name 'priest', closely connected with the administration of the sacraments as well as the word ('a sacramental ministry' was a phrase often used), and which they saw as a means of enabling and equipping the ministry of all the faithful. As a matter of fact, it appeared that the weight of evangelism undertaken by both communions, whether in Europe, Asia or Africa, was carried by the non-ordained. In Africa, for instance, Anglicans commented that new congregations were largely founded by evangelists, catechists and 'sub-deacons'.

Mission and liberty

37. Baptists and Anglicans alike regard liberty as a *consequence* of mission. But it has appeared as a Baptist emphasis to want to safeguard freedom *within* the very process of evangelism. As a Baptist from Argentina put it: 'The legitimacy of evangelism must be maintained, because everybody has the freedom to confess freely his/her faith, and the freedom to incorporate himself/herself into any religious group, even after being a member of another one'.⁶⁴ In that round of conversations, attention was given to the issue of proselytism as a misuse of freedom, from which both Anglicans and Baptists wished to distance themselves. While it was stated that this was only occasionally an issue at present between Anglicans and Baptists in Latin America, it was perceived as a potential problem that could become more weighty. The formulation offered by a WCC publication on common witness was quoted, that proselytism is the act of encouraging someone to change their church allegiance by methods that 'contradict the spirit of Christian love, violate the freedom of the human person and diminish trust in the Christian witness of the church'; such means may involve manipulation, violence, coercion or ridiculing of others.⁶⁵ The question was raised whether this is not too comfortable a definition; rather than the issue being one of illegitimate method, proselytism might be seen as *any* kind of encouragement to change denominational membership, where what was needed was sim-

ply encouragement to turn to the love and mercy of God. What was desirable, it was suggested, was ‘proselytism towards God’, and towards the kingdom of God, rather than towards any particular denomination of the church.⁶⁶ It was clear that while disavowing *encouragement* to change church membership, Baptists would still want to emphasize, however, the freedom of the person concerned to choose his or her own church-home for Christian life and witness after experiencing a new *or* renewed faith.

38. Such a defence of freedom of conscience is rooted deeply within historic Baptist aversion to any connection between church and state which gives territorial privileges to a particular church, or which allows the state to interfere in the inner life of the church, or which prevents the church from exercising a prophetic voice in society. In most parts of the world this has taken the form of urging a constitutional ‘separation of church and state’, though a flexible view of this theory has been taken by some Baptists, such as in England. In the Latin American round, in a strongly Roman Catholic context, Baptists thought it important to record that there had been Baptist influence on the enshrinement of separation between church and state within the Brazilian constitution.⁶⁷ Traditionally, Southern Baptists of the USA have been amongst the strongest advocates of the separation of church and state, but one Baptist contributor explained that they have recently interpreted this to mean that the state should take positive steps to ‘make room’ for the church to proclaim the gospel and to exert its influence in the process of making of law on social issues;⁶⁸ one high-profile issue has been its advocacy of the legalizing of Christian prayer in state schools. Another Baptist contributor suggested that there has been a shift from emphasizing one clause in the first amendment of the US Constitution, that prohibiting the ‘establishment of religion’, to another clause allowing the ‘free exercise of religion’. States may then be encouraged to make laws which allow for a ‘freedom of exercise’ in a way that some might think ‘establishes’ the majority (evangelical/Baptistic) view.⁶⁹ It remains to be seen what effect this change will have on the character of Baptist churches and on society.
39. While Anglicanism has been traditionally associated with the establishment of the church within the structures of the state, the basic Anglican view is one of a necessary *relationship* between church and state, preventing a privatization of the gospel and ensuring the influence of Christian values throughout society. This relationship can take different

Themes of the Conversations

forms in different situations, ranging from the establishment in law of the Church of England in England to the willingness of a church to register with the appropriate Government department in countries where this is required.

Baptism and the Process of Initiation

40. In any conversations between Anglicans and Baptists the question of baptism will present something of an impasse. On the one hand, Baptists find it impossible to treat as equivalent acts the baptism of young infants and the baptism of disciples who can confess their own faith, and so they find difficulties with the ecumenical notion of a 'common baptism'. On the other hand, Anglicans find it to be scandalous, and a real breach of fellowship in the universal church, if a Baptist congregation baptizes as a believer someone who has previously been baptized as an infant. Both communions agree that baptism is unrepeatable, and yet draw altogether different conclusions from this affirmation. Where Christian baptism is regarded *only* as the baptism of a disciple able to confess faith for himself or herself, then baptism of someone baptized as an infant will not be considered to be re-baptism.

Grace and faith in baptism

41. One step towards mutual understanding would be to abandon a certain 'type-casting' that sometimes happens, in which Baptists are represented as only interested in the confession of *faith* made in the baptism of believers - or more accurately, of disciples - and Anglicans are represented as only interested in the grace of God manifested in the baptism of infants. In *both* kinds of baptism, those who practise them can perceive elements of divine grace *and* human faith as being mingled there. The baptism of the believer, in most Baptist thought, offers a rendezvous between the disciple who comes in trusting faith, and the triune God who graciously transforms the life of the believer and endows him or her with spiritual gifts for service. This is also the case where Anglicans practise the baptism of adults who have come to a personal faith (as long as they have not previously been baptized as an infant). Those Baptists who think of baptism as essentially an obedient profession of faith will, of course, add that this faith is itself the gift of a gracious God. In Anglican thought about the baptism of an infant, while the prevenient grace of God is poured out in this act, there is also the offering of human faith by the parents and by the community which surrounds the child with its love and prayers. The Baptist problem with regarding infant

baptism as ‘baptism’, in the fullest sense, must be seen in this context of both grace and faith. It is not only that the nature of the *faith* present does not include the personal trust of the child; there also seems, to Baptists, to be some limit on the effect of the *grace* of God, as it appears to them that the baptism of an infant cannot include endowment with *charismata* for active service, and much of the New Testament language of change and regeneration also seems difficult to apply at such a young age.

A process of initiation

42. Another step towards a better understanding of each other’s position on baptism might be to recognize that the ‘beginning’ of the Christian life - or initiation - is not so much a single event, but a process or a journey which may extend over a considerable time. Divine grace and human faith, in their many and different aspects, are woven together during this ‘pilgrim’s progress’.⁷⁰ In line with this, the conversations at Norwich affirmed that ‘understanding initiation as a “process” has been widely accepted as a helpful approach’. While the whole of the Christian life is a journey of growing into Christ, there is a first stage to this journey that is aptly called a beginning. During the course of the conversations, the suggestion has gained ground that baptism, whether of infants or disciples, certainly plays a key part in this story of ‘beginning’ but is by no means the *whole* of the story. In seeking for greater understanding between churches, it was urged that comparison should be made not simply between the ways in which baptism is practised as a single event, but between varying shapes of the *whole journey* of initiation.⁷¹ This journey will include, as well as baptism, the working of the grace of God that prepares the human heart, early nurture within the community, the responsible ‘yes’ of faith by the individual, a sharing for the first time with other Christians in the Lord’s Supper, and the commissioning of the disciple for service. Thus, the question that arises is not whether the two communions can affirm a ‘common baptism’; these conversations did not have that aim. The question is how far each communion might be able to recognize that members of the other have made the same journey, wherever the place of baptism is located within it.
43. Discussion of baptism in the African round of conversations showed a strong identification between the rite and initiation into the corporate life and relationships of the community, while placing this point of entry and responsibility at two different stages of human growth. For those practising infant baptism, the Christian rite corresponds to the ‘naming’

Themes of the Conversations

ritual in traditional African religion, when the young child is first inducted into the community and 'becomes a human being' through receiving a name. Baptists see the act of infant blessing (sometimes called 'dedication') as fulfilling this essential function, and regard baptism as an equivalent to the African act of initiation into adult life within the community at the time of puberty. Both communions find resonance with African views of the life-giving aspects of water, and see the act of baptism as a rite of renewal. Life is renewed for the whole community at birth *and* at the transition into adult responsibilities. Of course, when adults are baptized in Anglican churches, it is the latter kind of initiation and renewal that is in mind, as among Baptists. This African concept of continually renewed membership of the community might provide some support for a theology of a 'journey of initiation', though it seems that as yet this idea has not been considered in ecumenical theology in Africa.

Confirmation and initiation

44. It will enlarge the common ground between Baptists and Anglicans if Anglicans clearly regard the laying on of hands in confirmation (however ambiguous the history and development of this rite may be) as *part of initiation*. It will help Baptists if Anglicans do not regard the 'beginning' of Christian life as being *complete* until there is this occasion for public profession of faith, and for receiving spiritual gifts for service in the world. It was recognized at Norwich that it is more difficult to recognize each other's journey into faith where stress is laid on baptism alone as 'complete sacramental initiation',⁷² and where confirmation is accordingly diminished in significance and understood simply as an occasion for the renewal of baptismal vows. While this trend was seen to be quite strong in the Church of England, it was notable that representatives of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Ireland regarded confirmation as the key place where those who had been baptized in infancy could make their own personal profession of faith, and that this should normally precede participation in the eucharist. Anglican representatives at Norwich thought that it was possible to speak of *baptism* as being complete (i.e. not being defective), while insisting that *initiation* was not completed by baptism alone. It was suggested that, while baptized but not yet confirmed infants need not be excluded from the eucharist, this should not be taken to imply that initiation *had been completed* even by participating in the eucharist for the first time, if confirmation had not yet taken place.⁷³

45. In the Asian phase of conversations there was an even stronger assertion that confirmation was essential to full initiation as a Christian disciple, parallel to the baptism of believers among Baptist congregations. The view of several Asian participants, and particularly those from the Church of North India and from Myanmar, was that the mutual life and mission of the churches that had been achieved would not have been possible without the place that confirmation had played within it. The example was cited of the shape of church unity within the Church of North India, where there is a parallel acceptance of two patterns of Christian nurture and initiation: (a) infant dedication (or blessing) followed by baptism as a believer with confirmation, and (b) infant baptism followed by later confirmation as a believer. The Baptist declaration of principle within the Constitution of the CNI was quoted here, that ‘profession of faith is required of those baptized in infancy before admission to membership in full standing in the Church, thereby acknowledging the nature of the Church as a fellowship.’⁷⁴ A bishop of the CNI present also stressed that ‘those who desire infant baptism for their children can have them baptized and, when they are grown enough to make a personal confession of faith and commitment to Christ, they are confirmed as full communicant members.’⁷⁵ Problems of fellowship will naturally arise within this parallel process of nurture if only one group of children within a single congregation, those who have been baptized, are admitted to the Lord’s Supper, a situation that occurs in some Local Ecumenical Partnerships in the UK. In the CNI it seems that this problem does not arise since, in all congregations, confirmation precedes communion, and this is also the majority practice in Asian Anglican churches. In Korea, however, baptized children can be admitted to eucharist before confirmation.
46. In African churches, the traditional importance of initiation into adulthood (see above) has not led to an emphasis on confirmation among Anglicans. Indeed, unlike the Asian scene, the decline of confirmation elsewhere in Anglican churches appears to be reflected in African Anglicanism. Two reasons suggest themselves. First, there is widespread adult baptism in a situation of large church growth. Second, the strong view of life in community means that when an infant is named/baptized, many of the aspects that the West attributes to an ‘age of responsibility’ are already assigned to the child vicariously (e.g. the responsibility to bury one’s parents). This does mean, however, that there is generally an insistence that children will only be baptized when

Themes of the Conversations

their parents are believers and already members of the community of faith; baptism, affirmed one Anglican participant, is ‘about corporate commitment.’⁷⁶ The growing practice of admission of baptized children to communion before confirmation also usually applies only to children of believing parents.

47. By contrast, the Province of the West Indies follows classic Anglican practice in formally requiring confirmation for sharing in the eucharist, according to its canon law (though it still offers eucharistic hospitality to baptized and communicant members of other denominations). Canon 30 in fact requires that every priest ‘shall diligently seek out persons whom he shall think meet to be confirmed.’ This seems to be supported by a ‘confirmation culture’ where the whole local church community gathers for the visit of the bishop; perhaps here there is a combination of factors that make confirmation so significant - the making of a personal link between the believer and the bishop as his or her pastor, as well as laying on of hands for spiritual gifts. In fact, the only exception to the importance of confirmation in the West Indies seems to be Haiti, where there is strong emphasis on baptism, which is regarded as the key moment for receiving the Spirit rather than confirmation.
48. An increasing number of Baptist churches also practise the laying on of hands after baptism,⁷⁷ following a custom which was common among General Baptists in England in earlier years. One Baptist participant in the North American conversations pointed out that this ought to be kept in mind in discussing the place of confirmation.⁷⁸ Like confirmation this provides an explicit opportunity for the commissioning of the disciple for service in the world - although this is already implied in the baptism of a believer - and for equipping with spiritual gifts to meet the task. Whether practised by Anglicans or Baptists, the act thus also draws attention to the association between baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Baptists, like Anglicans, can regard this act of laying on hands as part of the journey of beginning in the Christian life.

Open membership among Baptists

49. If there is a challenge to Anglicans to develop a new theology for confirmation in new circumstances, a challenge to Baptists is whether some positive theological place could be given to the baptism of young infants within a larger process of initiation. For those wishing to do so, this would imply, as a first step, a church polity of ‘open membership’ where intending members are not *required* to be baptized as believers. In the

European phase of conversations, it was reported that most Baptist churches belonging to the Baptist Union of Great Britain are 'open'; only 17% of Baptist churches require believers' baptism for people to be any kind of member; 51% of churches admit to full membership without requiring believers' baptism, and another 24% admit to an 'associate membership' without it. Elsewhere in Europe some form of 'associate membership' is widespread; 'open membership' is less usual, but 40% of Baptist churches in Denmark practise it, as do some churches in Scotland, Germany, Sweden, Lithuania, Estonia and Georgia,⁷⁹ together with 90% of Baptist churches in Italy with regard to those baptized as infants in Protestant churches.

50. In the Asian phase of the conversations, it was reported that open membership is universal among Baptist churches in Myanmar and in all Baptist churches which are members of the Church of North India. Though there are no full statistics for the remainder of the 53 member bodies of the Asian Baptist Fellowship, the BWA Regional Secretary spoke about a new emergence of open membership among churches of the North East Christian Council in India, and offered his impression that there is widespread hospitality offered to members of other denominations in Baptist churches throughout Asia, regardless of the mode of baptism; exceptional among these is Sri Lanka, where all of the churches are open membership. Closed membership *is* still common in large conventions which are based on the missionary activity of Southern Baptists, in Singapore, the Philippines and Hong Kong; these were unfortunately not represented at the conversations, although an invitation had been sent to the Philippines. The Baptist representative from Korea reported that while baptism as a believer by immersion was necessary for leadership in the church, it was not usually required for church membership. In Latin America, the representative group of Baptists gathered for conversation knew of no open membership churches at all.⁸⁰ In the West Indies, by contrast, there are many open membership churches in Jamaica, but only a few elsewhere. In North America, open membership churches are common among the American Baptist Churches of the USA (about 30%), and very rare (about 1%) among churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. Open membership is similarly rare among African-American Baptist churches in the USA. Open membership numbers in Australia vary from 4% in Queensland to 20% in the states of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, while it is found in 50% of churches in New Zealand. The picture, then,

Themes of the Conversations

is a mixed one, and statistics are incomplete, but it would be safe to conclude that overall there is a sizeable majority of Baptist churches worldwide which have closed membership.

51. Where open membership *is* practised among Baptist churches this does not, however, usually mean that a person *cannot* be baptized as a believer when he or she has previously received baptism as an infant. A Baptist church meeting finds it very difficult to refuse people who, after careful counselling, continue to insist from an instructed conscience that such a step is part of their path of discipleship. Nor does open membership mean in itself that a positive theological view is being taken of infant baptism; it may simply mean that, in a desire to be hospitable to other Christians, a profession of personal faith and an evident Christian life-style are considered to be the essential elements for membership (see further paragraphs 83-85). There are exceptions to this rule, however: some Baptist churches in Denmark, for example, require for admission to membership *either* baptism as a believer *or* a transfer from a church where the person has been baptized as an infant, thus implicitly giving some recognition to infant baptism where it has been followed by personal faith. Despite open membership, it would be very rare for a Baptist union or convention (outside the unique church unity scheme of the CNI) to issue a direct request to its member churches to decline from baptizing as a believer someone already baptized as an infant. Such a request would not only be unenforceable in practice; it might also be thought to infringe the freedom of conscience of the individual, and to infringe the freedom of a local church to discern the mind of Christ for itself.
52. Here the partnership between Baptists and Anglicans in the Myanmar Christian Council offers a striking development which deserves reflecting upon. In responding to the request of the document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* to refrain from any actions that might be regarded as repeating baptism, the Myanmar Baptist Convention pointed out that the real difficulty lay with new members who ‘themselves request to be given a second baptism’, rather than with what the churches themselves required.⁸¹ At the conversations in Yangon, the MBC then described how it had embarked on a process of ‘conscientization’ among the churches, using BEM as a study guide, to enable Baptist church members to understand the place of baptism in infant-baptist churches. The result was an agreement at the level of the Myanmar Council of Churches to refrain from what could be understood by others as a

‘second baptism’, and Baptist ministers are encouraged to carry out this policy. While there must remain some uncertainty about how far this request is actualized at a local level, both the Baptists and the Anglicans of Myanmar affirmed that the existence of the agreement made possible the extraordinarily close co-operation enjoyed in that country between Baptists and Anglicans. It is worth recording also, that the response of the Myanmar Baptist Convention to the entire BEM document included the following words:

We do not respond simply because it is expected of us. We respond because of our commitment to unity and the ongoing mission of the whole church in the whole world.⁸²

Membership of the Church

Different ways of belonging

53. Anglicans and Baptists accept from the Apostle Paul that there is the closest association between baptism and becoming a member of the body of Christ, which is the church (1 Cor. 12:13). Baptists will, however, understand this affirmation as referring to the baptism of a disciple able to confess his or her own faith. In some ecumenical situations, such as that of the Church of North India, an adjustment has been made to accommodate the whole process of initiation, by reserving the notion of ‘full membership’, or ‘full communicant membership’ for the stage of confirmation. By contrast, at Norwich the Anglican participants made clear that they could not accept the theological concept that infant baptism only offered a ‘partial membership’ in the body of Christ, which had to be followed by a ‘full membership’ later on. However, if initiation is to be understood as a ‘journey’ rather than a single point, this calls in turn for some re-thinking of the concept of membership. This seems necessary for Anglicans when literally millions of people in a country (say, the UK) have reached the first stage of baptism but never proceeded any further into an active sharing in the life of a church. In what sense are these people members of the body of Christ? A similar situation can also obtain, of course, when people have been baptized as believers but no longer seem to have an active faith. But a larger issue, perhaps, for Baptists is the status of the many believing children within their churches: are these ‘members of the body’, when they are certainly ‘in Christ’ through their own faith, but have not yet been baptized, and may not be commissioned as disciples through baptism for a number of years?

Themes of the Conversations

54. It was suggested from the Baptist side that a way forward here is not along the lines of partial and full membership, but through *different ways of being* a member, or different ways of ‘belonging’ within the body, according to the stage of the journey of faith which has been reached. This approach was echoed in the Latin American round of conversations when Anglicans took the view that infants at baptism become part of the body of Christ, but when confirmed as believers they ‘take responsibility and leadership’ in the church. A distinctive feature of membership on the African scene is the belief that this membership persists across the generations and beyond death, joining the living and the dead together in ‘a great cloud of witnesses’ (Hebrews 12:1).

Membership local and universal

55. A further issue about membership is whether this has any meaning other than the membership of the one universal (catholic) church. Because of its historic claim to be the continuing catholic church in England, serving the whole of the nation and having a responsibility for every person in a parish, the Church of England resists the idea of ‘membership’ of a local congregation. According to this way of thinking, through baptism someone becomes a member of the body of Christ universal, and this is - in theological terms - the only membership there can be. For practical purposes, one can be a ‘member of the electoral roll’ of a particular parish church, but this is regarded as a means of church government rather than a theological category. Membership of a single congregation is also less meaningful since the ‘local church’ is, according to the Anglican understanding of the church, the diocese or the extended congregation of the bishop.
56. By contrast, Baptists think of local church membership as a covenantal relationship between disciples ‘gathered together’ into a community in one place, normally entered by baptism. It was emphasized at Norwich that this must not be taken to mean that Baptists do not feel a responsibility to serve everyone in the society around them. Nor is local membership the whole meaning of church membership; the local covenant is a visible expression in one particular place of membership of the church universal, the great company of all those whose lives have been regenerated through the grace of God in Christ. Outside the Church of England, it is noticeable that an Anglican church takes on much more the aspect of a ‘gathered community’, and this was especially clear in conversations in the Asian context. An Anglican representative from

Korea mentioned that, although the diocese was divided into parishes, this made little sense as a unit for ministry in the Korean context. A representative from Hong Kong was more supportive of the parish system, but the situation may well change with a less British environment and a new Chinese ethos. An Anglican representative from Melbourne, Australia, could still see a use for some form of parish system, but thought it needed to be reformed and 'loosened up'.

57. The witness of the churches in Asia was that the Christian churches together are tending to form a common sub-culture or counter-culture over against the dominant culture of the country, and this is bound to give the churches the feel of a 'gathered community'. Differences in their own structure are often much less important than their difference from the dominant culture around. In Myanmar, for instance, in a largely Buddhist culture, Baptist ministers share a common identity with Anglican clergy as Christian ministers, sometimes identified by the same dress in church; they try to live as much as possible of a common life together, including sharing in the Lord's Supper, as a witness to the surrounding society. The convergence of the act of believers' baptism with the rite of confirmation may also be due to the need to have a unified Christian act of commitment which corresponds to some 'rite of passage' in the majority culture, such as the customary Theravada Buddhist initiation of all young Buddhist males for a temporary monastic experience. The point was made, however, from representatives of several Asian countries, that the dominant culture concerned (whether Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim) was not strictly the same as the dominant religion of the area; the 'way of life' was connected with the tenets of a particular religion, but was not exactly identical with its doctrines and practices.
58. Another reason for less difference in the view of church membership between Anglicans and Baptists outside England (see paragraphs 54-55) is the identity of denomination with ethnic group, arising from the old 'comity' arrangements of the missionary societies. Where to be a Naga Christian in Northern India, for example, means being Baptist for 80% of the Christian population - itself 95% of the whole population -, there is bound to be an overlap between the boundaries of church and society which has some affinity in practice to the Anglican Church in England.

'Autonomy' and interdependence

59. In Africa, both Anglicans and Baptists appealed to the idea of a

Themes of the Conversations

‘covenant community’, finding resonance with African tradition in Old Testament ideas of covenant, and this again tends to foster the sense of a gathered community. The close-knit sense of membership of a particular community may, however, lead to the elevation of local community over a more universal kind of fellowship; Baptists noted that there was a strong view of the autonomy of the local church in Africa, and Anglicans noted problems that sometimes arose from claims to autonomy by the separate dioceses and their bishops within a province.

60. The ‘autonomy’ of the local church was frequently mentioned in the conversations as a basic Baptist tenet reinforcing the importance of membership in a local church; it was just as frequently challenged by other Baptists present who pointed to the interdependency of churches in many areas of life. A paper from a Baptist in the West Indies began by stating that ‘local autonomy is at the heart of Baptist life’, but soon noted the key part played by the convention in such matters as ordination and ownership of property, concluding that ‘our experience has been that some [local Baptist pastors] use this issue as a tool of convenience.’⁸³ A Baptist contributor in the Latin American conversations referred to a concept of ‘*independent interdependency* among local churches and also among pastoral leadership’.⁸⁴ Baptists in fact have never held to autonomy in the literal sense of ‘self-rule’, but have instead held to direct dependence of the local church on the *rule of Christ*. Nothing can be *imposed* upon a local church meeting by other churches or assemblies of churches because members have the freedom and the responsibility to find the mind of Christ who rules in the congregation (see Matthew 18:15-20). They share in the three-fold office of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King, and so have the liberty to discern his kingly rule. But on the other hand, local churches have gladly affirmed that they often need the counsel and insight of other Christian congregations to find the mind of Christ. Because the local congregation makes the body of Christ visible in one place, it is under the direct authority of Christ and cannot be dictated to by human agencies; but just because its aim is to find the mind of Christ it will seek fellowship, guidance and counsel from as much of *the whole body of Christ* as it can relate to. It will associate and unite with others, not only for the sharing of resources for mission,⁸⁵ but because Christ is calling it to covenant with others. Baptist churches have therefore always lived together in spiritual interdependency with each other in associations, and their members regard themselves as having membership in the universal church of the redeemed, not just in a local congregation.

61. In practice, on the ground, the situation in a Baptist congregation may not appear very different from an Anglican one, where decisions taken at synodical level need to be *received* at the more local level. The local unit (whether parish or diocese) is obliged to follow synodical decisions in certain areas, but it will have been represented on the wider body on which the decisions were taken, and finally a policy will be applied in a way that meets the needs of the particular situation. A representative from the Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA) pointed out that winning the ‘consent of the faithful’ may mean that a decision is yielded to, resisted or adapted in subtle ways in the parish.⁸⁶ Moreover, the principle of ‘subsidiarity’ is strongly embedded in all decision-making, whereby ‘activities should be carried out at the lowest level at which they can be effectively undertaken.’⁸⁷ A task force that recently reviewed jurisdiction in the Anglican Church of Canada with regard to doctrine and discipline stated a variation of this principle, affirming that the power to decide a matter ‘should rest at the diocesan level unless the “mind of the Church” deems it to belong at another level’.⁸⁸ If a diocese is regarded as the ‘local church’ then this is quite close to a Baptist polity. Thus, Anglicans and Baptists alike desire to see the rule of Christ (what might be called ‘Christonomy’) worked out in *both* the local church and in the assembling of churches together, but they deal with the balance - and sometimes tensions - between these levels in somewhat different ways. It is worth also remarking that at the level of world communion, the Anglican Consultative Council of the Anglican Communion is at present a body for consultation and fellowship in a remarkably similar way to the Council of the Baptist World Alliance. In addition, however, the BWA has the mandate to bring as many church *members* as possible together in communion in congress every five years.

The Eucharist or Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper and spiritual nourishment

62. In these conversations, only one paper was formally presented on the nature of the Lord’s Supper, and that was by a Baptist from Jamaica. But from the conversation generated on that occasion, and from later discussion in the North American phase, there seems to be much less variation between Baptist and Anglican understanding of the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist than is often assumed. Rather, one might say that there is a similar range of variation within each communion. Baptists and Anglicans stress, to varying degrees, elements of *anamnesis* (remem-

Themes of the Conversations

brance as ‘making the past present’), *eucharisteia* (thanksgiving), *koinonia* (communion and fellowship), anticipation of the future kingdom and meeting with Christ at his table. Anglicans go on to emphasize the grace imparted by God through the sacrament. This is not without some counterpart in Baptist thinking, and it is wrong to regard Baptists in general as having an extreme Zwinglian view of ‘mere memorial’ (indeed, it is doubtful whether Zwingli held such a view himself); many have followed Calvin in his understanding of a ‘spiritual nourishment’ offered through the supper, and in finding a special opportunity provided there for sharing in the benefits of the death of Christ. Like other Reformed groups, Baptists have refused to locate the presence of the Christ in the elements in any restrictive way, finding the presence of the crucified and risen Christ in the whole event of the meal and in the gathered congregation. They have also declined to identify any change in the bread and wine other than a change in significance in the special use to which the elements are being put. All this is well summarized in the Baptist contribution to which reference has been made, and from which the following is a helpful extract:

Baptist churches in the Caribbean affirm the Eucharist as *anamnesis* of Christ A strong focus is placed on the past, but this is accompanied by a strong recognition of the immeasurable benefits of Christ’s unrepeatable sacrifice at Calvary for those participating in the Holy Communion. To this extent, the matter of the presence of Christ at the Lord’s Supper is deemed to be real. After wails of grief follows the confession of sin ... [and then] shouts of joy accompany the participation in the Communion. These pious shouts bespeak a clear sense of the nearness of the one who gave his all for the sake of our salvation.⁸⁹

In the North American phase, a Southern Baptist representative commented that, although his tradition places emphasis on remembrance in the sense of memorialism, ‘there is a rising sense among younger Southern Baptists that the Lord’s Supper should be understood in a Calvinistic sense as a spiritual communion with the risen Christ and His body.’⁹⁰

Sacrament and ordinance

63. While Baptists in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries used the words ‘sacrament’ and ‘ordinance’ interchangeably, reaction against the Oxford Movement in the nineteenth century led to a favour-

ing of the term 'ordinance' by many (but not all) Baptists. It is now almost universal on the continent of Europe and in the USA. The term 'ordinance' is used positively to affirm the institution of the Supper by the Lord himself, and negatively to deny any change in the *substance* of the elements. It should, however, not be taken to mean a denial of the presence of Christ *in any manner* in the meal, nor as simply equivalent to a 'bare memorialist' view. The Jamaican writer of the paper referred to above rightly comments that 'the tradition of type-casting churches as sacramental and non-sacramental has negatively affected the question of the real presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper.' Differences between Anglicans and Baptists have been described in exactly this simplistic way. The group gathered for the North American phase wanted to stress that a recognition that the manner of the presence of Christ is not definable by any theory is common ground between Anglicans and Baptists.

64. Anglicans generally regard the elements of bread and wine as both 'expressive' signs (portraying the death of Christ) and 'effective' signs (conveying the grace of God which springs from the sacrifice of Christ). The emphasis, often heard among Baptists that the elements are 'only a symbol' should not be taken to mean 'only a visual aid'. Those who use this language may mean by it what Anglicans often indicate by speaking of an effective sign; but Baptists are making clear that it is *God* who creates the effect *through* the sign. One more quotation from the Jamaican Baptist paper is apposite: 'Caribbean Baptists sometimes put it like this - "Something happens to us whenever we partake of the Lord's Supper" ... they experience the gracious hand of God upon their lives, forgiving their sins, offering them nourishment for the pilgrimage of the Christian life, and drawing them into ever deeper communion with the Trinity ... ordinance is understood to have sacramental significance.'⁹¹
65. Anglicans are accustomed to speak of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion as 'a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving'. While this is not a familiar expression among Baptists, when they hear it they are likely to be comfortable with this use of a scriptural phrase. The term 'eucharistic sacrifice' sometimes used by Anglicans may sound more alarming to Baptists, but it should be remembered that 'eucharist' here simply means 'thanksgiving'. In both communions there has been a renewal of theologies of creation in recent years, and the idea that the prayer of thanksgiving sums up 'the sacrifice of praise' of all created things has found a place in both Anglican and Baptist liturgies and is reflected in the setting before God of the elements of bread and wine.

Themes of the Conversations

Within the movement of the service, both Anglicans and Baptists re-dedicate themselves to the Lord 'as a living sacrifice' (Romans 12:1) in and through the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Like Baptist thought, Anglican theology emphasizes that this sacrifice cannot be repeated; Anglicans may however lay more stress on the way that the elements portray or represent the sacrifice of Christ, and they have recently found it helpful to think of being 'drawn into the movement of his self-offering' in the Eucharist.

Presidency at the Supper

66. For the first two centuries of their life in England, Baptists generally insisted that only the ordained minister could preside at the Communion table. This was partly because the pastor had been set aside for this ministry by the church meeting, and partly because the pastor had been ordained by other pastors who represented the wider fellowship of churches. A change came in the nineteenth century, when it became widely accepted that other church members could be called and appointed by the church meeting to preside in case of need. It is incorrect then to regard the historic Baptist view as being that 'anyone can preside at the table', and to link this view with the 'priesthood of all believers'. Only those may preside who are recognized by the church meeting as having been called by Christ to do so, and those are *usually*, as a matter of 'good church order', those already called by Christ to be pastors. The possibility in principle of a non-ordained member presiding on occasion does differentiate Baptists from Anglicans, for whom episcopal ordination as priest is the requirement, without any exceptions. For Baptists, the commission from Christ, through the Spirit, is the key. However, an Anglican representative from Chile also offered the view that, for pastoral reasons, a lay-person should be able to preside at communion when no priest was available (a view which has also been espoused by some Roman Catholic liberation theologians); moves had apparently been made in this direction within Chile, but had been halted by the Province in deference to the wider Anglican Communion.⁹² In the conversations in both Latin America and the Caribbean it was noted that, despite a professed 'anti-clericalism', Baptist church members in fact wanted the pastor to preside. This is in fact thoroughly in line with Baptist tradition, and any surprise only comes from the fact that regular practice within free evangelical churches of presidency by those other than the pastor has gradually seeped into Baptist practice too.

Eucharistic hospitality

67. Without any recorded exception, Anglican churches offer hospitality at the Communion table to baptized Christians who would normally share in communion in their own churches. Some complaint was heard at the Latin American conversations that there was not the same openness of the table in Baptist churches. Baptists responded that this was admittedly the case in the past, but that the situation had changed and 'most' Baptist churches in Latin America now have an open table, including in Brazil where this was a recent development (though here it seems to be restricted to fellow Protestant-believers). The open table, it was reported, is almost universal in the West Indies. This in fact is the prevailing practice among Baptist conventions and unions affiliated to the Baptist World Alliance. Churches of the Southern Baptist Convention present something of a contrast, in that a number only open the table to other Baptists; many, however, issue an open invitation to 'all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ'.
68. Typical explanations offered by those Baptist churches which offer an open table despite closed membership would be that the table belongs to the Lord and not to the church, and that the table is the visible sign of the spiritual unity of all Christian people despite other divisions. Indeed, Baptist understanding of the Lord's Supper has always given a central place to the fellowship of believers with each other around the Lord's table. Baptists believe that they can know the mind of Christ in church meeting because, joined in covenant relationship, they are his body. This embodiment of Christ in the church will also be expressed in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; the congregation *as* the body of Christ breaks bread which represents the body of Christ. There is an overlap here with recent Anglican thinking that it is the whole congregation that celebrates the Eucharist with the priest as the president of the assembly. The wider context is the Anglican understanding that the church is identified by the administration of the sacraments (Eucharist and baptism) together with the preaching of the word. With regard to the aspect of 'fellowship' of members with one another in the Supper or Eucharist, the most obvious difference is probably not in theology at all, but in the manner of reception of the bread and wine. Most Baptists sit together in fellowship 'around the table' by remaining in their seats and being served by the deacons. Anglicans come forward and kneel at the altar rail to be served; while this emphasizes the nature of the elements as 'gifts of God for the people of God', it can also be a communal act

Themes of the Conversations

which expresses mutual fellowship as people kneel together. The physical difference between sitting and coming to kneel at the rail may be felt as the most evident difference between Anglican and Baptist services by many participants.

Episkope or Oversight

Three dimensions of episkope

69. In the Norwich conversations, Anglican participants returned to the wording of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888, which proposed four principles as the basis for visible unity between the Churches. Alongside Holy Scripture, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and the two sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, it placed 'the historic episcopate, locally adapted.... to the varying need of the nations and people called by God...' In the Yangon conversations, the presentation made by the Anglican Church in Myanmar similarly highlighted the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, regarding it as 'a point of identity for much of the Anglican communion'.⁹³ It also featured centrally in a presentation on the meaning of authority from the Anglican Church of Canada.⁹⁴ In the 1888 statement, and in recent ecumenical conversations, Anglican churches have stressed that the episcopal office - while not being of the very essence of the church - plays a vital part in maintaining the health of the church, as having a 'representative nature in focusing the *koinonia* of the church in time and space.'⁹⁵ In accord with a widespread understanding among churches today, Anglicanism defines *episkope* ('oversight') as having three dimensions: communal (exercised by the church corporately, especially in synod), personal (embodied in a single person in an area) and collegial (as exercised by bishops in communion with each other and with presbyters). None of these dimensions exists on its own, and the three are interdependent.
70. In Norwich, Baptists replied that they also have always recognized these three dimensions of *episkope* within and among the churches.⁹⁶ However, in the first place the basic personal ministry of oversight is given to the minister or pastor in the *local* church, whom many early Baptists called either 'elder' (*presbuteros*) or 'bishop' (*episkopos*) without distinction. Oversight in the local community flows to and fro between the personal and the communal, since the responsibility of 'watching over' the church belongs both to all the members gathered in church meeting and to the pastor. This is grounded in the theological principle of the primary rule of *Christ* in the congregation. Baptists do,

however, also recognize *episkope* at an inter-church level. Oversight is exercised communally by a regional association of churches, which in assembly seeks the mind of Christ for the life and mission of the member churches, while having no power to *impose* decisions on the local church meeting. Oversight flows freely between the communal and the personal here too, as personal oversight is exercised by various kinds of senior ministers who are linked either with the association or with the convention/union at state or national level.

Two offices or three orders of ministry?

71. Anglicanism places the personal ministry of *episkope* within the context of a three-fold order of ministry. In the words of the Preface to the Ordinal (1662), it affirms that ‘from the Apostles’ time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ’s Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons’. In Baptist practice, there are variations on a basically two-fold office of minister (or pastor) and deacon. In British Baptist life, ‘regional ministers’ (previously called ‘general superintendents’) are appointed to minister among the churches in regional areas. In Baptist Unions elsewhere in Europe which are smaller in size, this oversight role may be undertaken by officers of the whole union or convention; in some Eastern European Baptist unions (for example, Latvia, Moldova and Georgia), these pastors are explicitly designated as ‘bishops’. In a different situation, the title ‘bishop’ has just begun to appear in a few African-American Churches. Such inter-church ministry is certainly understood to be episcopal, in the sense of being a form of pastoral oversight, but in nearly all places it is not understood as creating a third order of ministry beyond the two-fold office of deacons and pastors (one exception appears in the Georgian Baptist convention).⁹⁷ Rather, this ministry is seen as an extension of the episcopal ministry of the local pastor, and appointment of such senior ministers is made by the churches together in assembly, just as a local church meeting sets aside its own *episkopos*.
72. The theological principle here is that first the church gathers in fellowship (*koinonia*), and this calls for oversight (*episkope*) to guide and maintain it; there is no sense that the office of oversight, however it is expressed, *creates* the fellowship and unity of the church. As a Baptist contribution in Santiago put it, ‘Baptists in Latin America do not accept that the episkope role is the safeguard of the unity of the church, because real unity rests in Christ himself not in a human office.’⁹⁸ It should be noted, however, that an Anglican bishop from Chile agreed that while

Themes of the Conversations

the presence of the bishop was a *help* towards unity, no bishop on his own constituted the unity of the church.⁹⁹

Local 'adaptation' of episkope

73. In Norwich, the question was raised as to what the phrase 'locally adapted' in the 1888 statement might mean in practice with regard to the episcopate, and how open the Church of England might be to a re-shaping of the *episkope*. One answer was given in the North American phase, when representatives of the Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA) described their adaptation of the role of bishop in a context where there was an existing pre-Revolution tradition of strong involvement by the laity in congregational government of the church. Here the principle of the parish 'Vestry', a council elected by members of the church, was extended into a wider sphere. Thus the parish Vestry calls the rector, though with the approval of the bishop. At the diocesan level, standing committees which comprise elected lay and ordained members share the oversight of the diocese with the bishop.¹⁰⁰ One bishop of ECUSA who participated in the conversations remarked that 'there is very little a bishop can do on his or her own.'
74. In the meeting in Yangon, the model of unity in the Church of North India (CNI) was cited as another possible example of adaptation, as the CNI declares in its constitution that 'the Church is not committed to any one particular theological interpretation of episcopacy.' A bishop of the CNI with a Baptist background stressed that the CNI defines the episcopate as being both 'historic and constitutional'. The 'constitutional' aspect means that in all decisions the bishop has to win the consent, not only of fellow bishops, but of the church council which he serves. This evidently blends personal and communal *episkope* (and so gives a new meaning to collegiality) in a way which builds upon both the Anglican and Baptist tradition, without exactly duplicating either. Here the degree of sharing in oversight between bishop and council seems to exceed even the co-operation between bishop and standing committees in the ECUSA model. The bishop expressed the situation in this way:

As president of his diocesan Council... [the bishop] has obviously a great deal of influence. If he has earned the trust of his people, there is a great deal of freedom available to him to take initiatives. But in all matters he must carry his Council with him... Pastoral authority is not a coercive authority. It is based on a leader's servant spirit, which must manifest the compassion of Christ.¹⁰¹

75. It was significant that, in the formation of the CNI, the uniting Baptist churches in their declaration of intent took note that the proposed episcopate would make 'reasonable provision for all believers to share in seeking the mind of Christ in the affairs of the Church as far as they are able'. The Baptist churches also affirmed that they were acting 'in exercise of the liberty that they have always claimed ... to interpret and administer the laws of Christ'.¹⁰² This reflects in a new context the general Baptist understanding of the liberty of the local church; it seems that the Baptists of North India were claiming a freedom to work out the implications of the 'lordship of Christ in his church' in new forms of *episkope*. It must be added, however, that not all Baptist churches in the existing Council of Baptist Churches in North India agreed with them, and most did not join the new CNI.
76. The African round of consultation suggested another way of understanding the relation between personal and communal *episkope*, based in traditional understanding of the relation between leader and community rather than a western concept of individualism. The Anglican representatives conceded that the bishop appears as a strongly authoritative figure, and recognized the Baptist suspicion of a hierarchy which (in their view) disempowers the congregation.¹⁰³ This impression has been reinforced by the taking of traditional chieftancy titles by some bishops in Nigeria. However, the rooting of leadership in community means that the bishop is expected to represent and to voice the consensus of the people. This kind of representation does not fit in neatly to western democratic traditions of majority voting, but still requires a deep immersion into the life of the people and sensitivity to their concerns. In the Latin American conversations, an Anglican complaint was heard that the model for a bishop is North American, and contains a large element of the administrator. The result is the 'loneliness of the bishop'.

A sign of apostolicity?

77. Whatever the structures of consultation and consent with which *episkope* is surrounded, the Anglican understanding of *episkope* as a historic sign of apostolic continuity means that those ordained to parish ministry (presbyters and deacons) must be ordained by the bishop. While there are some Baptist unions (in Eastern Europe, for example), in which the union or convention president *must* be involved in laying on of hands, the presiding of such a regional minister is usually regarded as 'good order' rather than essential. Baptists, however, more generally

Themes of the Conversations

require the gathering of other churches and their ministers to offer their consent for ordination, since the local minister represents the wider church of Christ to the local community. Such seeking of the guidance of the Holy Spirit shows again an integration of personal and communal *episkope*. The presentation of the Baptist Convention of Myanmar laid stress on their tradition of an ‘ordination council’ consisting of about seven neighbouring churches and ministers (common among many Baptists in the USA and in Canada); indeed, it lamented that this tradition was being ignored by some places at present, due to the influence of new church movements that it clearly regarded as non-Baptistic.¹⁰⁴ There is a kind of extension of the ‘ordination council’ in the state Baptist unions affiliated with the Baptist Union of Australia, where ministers are ordained at an assembly of the state union, or at least at a service arranged or approved by the union.

78. In summary, Baptists and Anglicans are agreed that ‘apostolicity’ consists in the succession of the *faith*, as it is received and passed on, through the whole *community* of the people of God. Both Anglicans and Baptists understand that God has given a variety of means for preserving and interpreting the apostolic faith, which will include the minister in a single congregation and regional ministries. But among these means, Anglicanism finds one particular office - the regional bishop - to be a sign and safeguard of the apostolic tradition in a way which is indispensable for the well-being of the life of the church.

The Meaning of Recognition

Stages towards recognition?

79. One aim of these conversations between Baptists and Anglicans has been to look for ways ‘to increase our fellowship and common witness to the gospel’. This does not, of course, imply any intention to move towards a unity of churches, other than to deepen our already existing spiritual unity with each other; but it does raise the question as to whether, and in what sense, we can ‘recognize’ each other as true churches of Jesus Christ. This kind of mutual recognition will seem to be more important for some Baptists and Anglicans than for others, and it will seem more urgent in some circumstances than others. For some who read this report it will not appear to be a question at all, while for those participating in the conversations from the areas of the world we visited it seemed that the task of mission would be helped by greater public affirmation of each other. We need to be sensitive to different

needs *within* our communions in this matter, as much as *between* the communions. These conversations are not intended to commit any unions, conventions or provinces to steps that they do not wish to take at this time, although we hope that all will find some challenge in the questions that arise.

80. At the meeting in Europe, the delegates from the Church of England proposed an approach 'in stages' to the question of recognition of each other as Christian churches. At the first level, local churches share fellowship in practical ways in worship and mission, and so informally recognize the reality of Christian life and ministry in each other. This could be called recognition in the sense of '*seeing each other as*' Christian communities, but it is not recognition in the sense of 'approval' or 'validation'. It was clear at Norwich that the Anglican participants regarded Local Ecumenical Partnerships in the UK as an extension of this first stage of 'seeing as', and that the agreement of churches to walk together as pilgrims in an inter-church process or to form national councils of churches was the taking of this stage to a more corporate level. The second stage is official recognition, where each church formally affirms the other as a 'true church belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church', and states that in the other church the word of God is authentically preached, the sacraments are truly celebrated and the ministry is truly given by God.¹⁰⁵ The Anglican delegation at Norwich made clear that this stage requires at least an *intention* to move towards fuller visible unity in due time. There can, however, at this second stage still be issues on which agreement has not yet been reached - such as lay presidency at the eucharist, or forms of oversight which do not fully correspond to the Anglican episcopacy. The third stage is 'full communion' (sometimes just called 'communion'), marked by a common celebration of the sacraments, a common ministry and common structures for mutual consultation and shared decision-making.
81. If these three stages are clearly separated out in this way, then the present conversations between the BWA and the Anglican Communion have their place only within the first stage. This indeed has been the view taken by the Anglican representatives on the Continuing Committee. These discussions are not of the kind that can result in the second stage of 'formal recognition', though they can prepare for further conversations that might have this result. A staged approach was reflected in the resolution of the Lambeth Conference (1998) which committed Anglicans to the present conversations, and which welcomed the idea

Themes of the Conversations

that 'an initial core group... could meet Anglicans and Baptists in different regions for a first quinquennium, with a view to the identification of issues for study in an international forum in a second quinquennium.'¹⁰⁶ As noted in the introduction to this report, the present quinquennium has, nevertheless, been marked by serious theological discussion which has been welcomed by the representatives of both communions.

An overlap of stages?

82. It must be said that Baptists approach the issue of recognition a little differently from the 'staged' approach. Although it is probably only a small minority of Baptists throughout the world who are committed to a search for 'visible unity' (stage 3), most Baptists will find it difficult to separate out the first two stages of 'recognition' quite so sharply. They find a constant overlap between them, which becomes more and more blurred as churches live and work together at a local level. 'Seeing each other as' Christian communities leads for Baptists naturally into a public affirmation of the other as a truly apostolic church and to an acceptance of the validity of ministry within that church. For Baptists on the UK scene, for example, participating in the inter-church process of 'Churches Together' implies a recognition of each other as part of the one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In the Asian phase of the BWA-Anglican conversations these two stages also tended to merge into one another. In the context of a dominant non-Christian culture, such as Theravada Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia, churches are more ready to recognize the integrity of the orders of ministry among each other (rather as a military chaplain from one denomination might serve all Protestant Christian believers in time of conflict). In both Latin America and the West Indies, there was some ambivalence towards recognition of Baptist ministry by Anglicans; on the one hand, there was a distinct sense of the necessity for episcopal ordination as part of Anglican identity, while on the other hand there was some impatience with denominational divisions which it was felt had been brought to their countries by missionaries in a colonial situation, and which it should be possible to get beyond. The blurring between 'stages of recognition' is less marked, however, where Baptists insist that unity is 'only spiritual' without implications for the concrete life of the church, as would be the case - among others - with the Southern Baptists of the USA.

Limits in recognition: ministry and baptism

83. Each of the communions in conversation feels that the other falls short in one area of recognition in particular - for Anglicans it is the refusal of most Baptists to recognize their baptism as infants, and for Baptists it is the reluctance of many Anglicans to recognize their ordained ministry. It has emerged in these conversations that the Anglican Church is in fact in the process of a 'paradigm shift' in its recognition of the ministry of those who have not been ordained through an episcopal succession, and this seems to be reflected in the ambivalence towards Baptist ministerial orders mentioned in the previous paragraph. At the 'second stage' of recognition it is certainly possible now to recognize the authenticity of the ministry in word and sacrament of those who have not been episcopally ordained, and who serve in churches where there are not (or not yet) bishops in the sense of the Anglican three-fold order. Their ministry can be recognized as being a genuine call from God and a means of feeding the life of the people of God. Recognition of genuineness does not, however, mean an 'interchangeability' of ministry, in which a minister of a non-episcopal church could simply be substituted for an Anglican priest. This awaits fuller communion. While episcopacy is a *sign* of apostolic succession, and is not of the essence of the church, interchangeability would require an agreement concerning oversight, and this would involve being in canonical relationship to a bishop.
84. Now, within this perspective, it seems that in many situations the same practical recognition of the genuineness of Christian ministry *can* be extended to churches which are still at the 'first' stage of recognition, which includes Baptists. Just as Christian communities can be 'seen as' places where the church of Christ is present, so ministry can be 'seen as' really happening there. In this Anglican view, an ordained minister of another church has a genuine ministry within that church and within the universal church, and people (including Anglicans in appropriate circumstances) can receive genuine pastoral care and sacramental nourishment from that ministry, while it is not of course a ministry within the Anglican Church. Baptists will feel that this marks an advance in mutual understanding and partnership in the gospel. Moreover, it appears that in at least two situations where Baptist and Anglican churches are in fellowship with each other and other Christian Churches, in the group of Covenanted Churches in Wales and in the Council of Churches in South Africa, a more formal recognition of the validity of ordained ministry among Baptists has been declared by the Anglican participants. This

Themes of the Conversations

seems to be the kind of recognition of authenticity (though not of course interchangeability) of ministry which would normally belong to the 'second stage' of recognition. However, where there is no formal acknowledgement of the other as a true church of Jesus Christ, it seems that there will be ambiguities about even a practical recognition of ministry, and this must be felt by Baptists as a limit on the possibilities of fellowship and shared mission.

85. For their part, however, most Baptists do not notice any incongruity in their willingness to recognize another Christian community as a true church of Christ, affirming its ministry and its celebration of the Lord's Supper, while at the same time declining to recognize its *baptism*. Some Baptists will recognize others as being members of a true church, although they have only been baptized as infants, while still insisting that they should be baptized as a confessing disciple before admission to their *own* church ('closed membership'). Others practise 'open membership' and do not insist on what other Christians may regard as a re-baptism, though they find it difficult to refuse baptism to any who sincerely desire it, and might even (in some pastoral circumstances) encourage that desire. But in all these cases the acceptance of another church can be *regardless* of the kind of baptism practised there. A typical Baptist explanation for this position would be that true baptism is indeed the baptism of a confessing believer, and that this is the 'one baptism' referred to in Ephesians 4:5, but that other Christian communities can still be recognized as true churches because they exhibit in their lives the one Spirit, one body, one hope, and one faith which God grants (Eph. 4:3-8).
86. Some Baptists will offer a doctrinal justification for this separation of baptism from church membership, along the lines that faith alone is required for the gathering of a church and that baptism is not a 'church ordinance' but a matter of personal obedience to Christ. Other Baptists feel that there *is* an inconsistency here, since they agree with the Reformers that a true church is one where 'the word of God is rightly preached and the sacraments rightly administered'; but they are prepared to live with this anomaly on the grounds of giving to others the right of freedom of conscience, of respecting the obedience of others to the commands of Christ, and of recognizing that 'God has accepted them' (Rom. 14:3). A third group of Baptists will try to resolve the inconsistency by recognizing the baptism of infants as a form of baptism which is derived from the norm of believers' baptism, and which is valid

when it is part of a whole process of initiation which includes the faith of the individual believer. In one of these three ways, all of which have been expressed by various participants in these conversations, Baptists can recognize as 'church' a Christian community which baptizes infants; they also think it to be part of their Baptist ethos to give one another the freedom to differ among themselves about this issue.

87. Anglicans, however, will insist without exception on baptism as entrance to the Christian church, and - despite Baptist protestations - will feel that they are being 'unchurched' if their baptism is not recognized. This itself makes difficult the *formal* recognition of Baptist churches. It is compounded because Anglicans take the Reformation view that one of the marks of a true church is that the sacraments should be 'rightly administered'. Anglicans will, of course, gladly recognize a baptism which has taken place in a Baptist church with the use of the triune name of God and water, as long as it is not - in their view - a re-baptism. But the practice of baptizing as a believer someone previously baptized as an infant cannot be regarded by them as a proper administration of the sacraments, since baptism by its nature (as entrance into the church, and participation in the once-for-all act of salvation by Christ) is unrepeatable. In face of this dilemma, the writers of this report suggest that the image of initiation as a journey (see above, paragraph 42) may increase understanding of other's position, although it seems that it cannot at this stage resolve the differences in conviction.

Failures in recognition

88. The African round of conversations disclosed less joint fellowship and activity between Baptists and Anglicans than happens in the UK and in many parts of Asia, although there was a more cooperative situation in East Africa and overall there was a great deal of common ground in the Africanization of theology. In the conversations between Baptists and Anglicans in Latin America, identity seemed almost interchangeable, with a shared concern for evangelism that put differences about baptism and ministry into the shade; but this commonality, discovered in conversation, was by no means reflected in existing co-operation which was limited. In Brazil, Anglicans are often regarded by Baptists as a branch of Roman Catholicism, or at least non-Protestant, and contact between the two groups is virtually non-existent. The situation in the West Indies is patchy; in the Bahamas, for instance, while Baptist and Anglican ministers 'know each other as friends', and many Anglicans will speak of

Themes of the Conversations

their roots in both Anglican and Baptist sectors, there is little joint activity among the congregations; by contrast, there are strong ecumenical relations in Jamaica, and there is an obvious influence on the churches which comes from the ecumenical theological training at United Theological College, Kingston.

89. In the African round there was a perception among Anglicans, particularly in South Africa, that recognition was hindered by different approaches to Scripture between the two communions. However, while Baptists were often thought to adopt a more literalist interpretation than Anglicans, the conversations themselves showed that there was a similar approach to Scripture as 'sacred story' among both groups. One Anglican comment was that there was more acceptance and partnership at the local than regional level, marked by celebration in funerals, weddings and festivals shared together in the 'extended family'. A Baptist from Zimbabwe felt that in his country and others (Malawi, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia were also named at different times) the mission agencies still exercised a great deal of influence in inhibiting ecumenical relations which the churches were more anxious to pursue, and that this was blocking joint action in mission.

The desire for mutual recognition

90. In all places where conversations were held, there was a strong desire expressed by the participants for increased recognition of each other as partners in the faith, to be expressed in life and work together. The term 'ecumenical' was thought to be a hindrance among Baptists in some places, and especially in Latin America, but the reality it signified was thought desirable without exception. As well as an inner motivation for unity, the context was seen to exert a pressure for greater sharing, in different ways. In Asia, as already observed, there is the incentive of being surrounded by a dominant non-Christian culture. In Latin America the need for Baptist-Anglican co-operation is heightened by the distressing fragmentation in Christian witness brought about by new independent churches, using television evangelism and appealing to a prosperity gospel; in this situation, as one Baptist put it, 'the pastoral ministry of the church is challenged to work for a true unity of the church.'¹⁰⁷ In the West Indies, a Baptist participant stressed that mutual recognition by Christians would be a means towards finding a basis for Caribbean unity at a regional level. In the face of a lack of a common body of historical and cultural traditions, due to the activity of multiple colonial powers,

the church can and must be part of the process towards social, political and economic unity.¹⁰⁸ Thus, some kind of recognition of each other has been regarded by the participants in these conversations as not simply a matter of 'ecumenical' structures. Rather, it has been felt to be the basis for the practical matters of life and mission which have been interwoven with theological issues throughout this report.

4

Questions and Challenges

The following questions are directed to churches and individuals who read this report, both Anglicans and Baptists. They are posed in the light of the experience of the conversations throughout the world, and so the questions are listed under the headings which correspond to those in the account above, and references are added to particular paragraphs which may give a helpful background. Some of the questions are intended simply to aid further exploration of the themes of the report. Some, however, are also intended to be challenges to the understanding that Anglicans and Baptists might have of each other, and to offer suggestions for further action.

1. The Importance of Continuity

- Can Baptists understand why Anglicans value being part of a continuous story of the church through history since the time of the Apostles? Can Anglicans understand why Baptists think it essential for their story to connect directly with the experience of the disciples in the New Testament? (3-9)
- Is it possible that a Baptist emphasis on being directly linked to ‘the New Testament church’ might lead to individualism and a kind of self-sufficiency, neglecting the reality of the church through time and across the world? Is it possible that an Anglican emphasis on being part of the ‘catholic church’ through the ages might lead to a rejection or marginalizing of those who do not think of themselves as standing in this tradition?
- In what ways might Baptists and Anglicans see their stories as having run in parallel, in the purposes of God, since the Reformation of the church? Might this especially apply to the place of the two traditions (establishment and dissent) in the life of Britain? (4)
- What difference does it make to a sense of continuity when a Christian community values the cultural heritage of its own society or ethnic group, and sees God as having been at work within it? (10-14) In this situation, in what new ways might both Anglicans and Baptists need to tell their stories?

2. Confessing the Faith

- Anglicans and Baptists in these conversations affirmed that the ‘supreme authority in faith and practice’ is Jesus Christ himself. (25) Do the

Questions and Challenges

implications of this principle need to be worked out more thoroughly in current disputes within both communions?

- Can Baptists recognize how much their reading of scripture is in fact shaped by the historic creeds of the Christian church? Would it be better to talk of 'scripture as primary' rather than 'scripture alone'? (26) Is there really a difference between a creed and a confession? (20-22)
- Can Anglicans ask what they mean by 'reason' in the famous triad 'scripture-tradition-reason', in view of comments made about this in the conversations? (26) Can Anglicans ask themselves whether they always make tradition and the use of reason secondary to the authority of scripture?
- Can Anglicans recognize the essence of the ecumenical creeds in the prayers, hymns and preaching of a church which does not normally use the actual creeds in its liturgy? Can Baptists who do not normally say creeds make special occasions when they *can* be used (e.g. covenant renewal services)? How can Baptists answer the Anglican anxiety that without a creed there would be no clear standard or basis of faith?
- How far - if at all - do differences between Anglicans and Baptists in their practice of ministry, oversight and baptism reflect differences in the understanding of the apostolic faith itself?
- What occasions might there be for making clear publicly that Anglicans and Baptists confess the same faith in Christ and proclaim the same Christian gospel?

3. Mission and Ministry

- Does the distinction suggested in the report between two models of mission - inside and outside the borders of the church (27-29) - help to clarify different approaches to mission sometimes taken by Anglicans and Baptists?
- Are Anglicans still working with the stereotype that Baptists only have a pastoral concern for their own members, while Anglicans care for all the members of society? Are Baptists still working with the stereotype that Anglicans think there is no need to proclaim the gospel to those who have been baptized as infants?
- Can Anglicans and Baptists in the West face the criticism from those in the South and the East that missionary preaching in the past failed to have a 'holistic' view of the human being? Are western Christians aware that

churches in the South and East think that their prophetic and servant ministries are often inhibited by the attitudes and expectations of their partners in western churches? (30-32)

- What is meant by the ‘priesthood of all believers’, or ‘the royal priesthood of the people of God’, and how does this relate to involvement in mission? In what ways is the practice of believers’ baptism helpful in fostering this link? What is implied by calling a Christian minister a ‘priest’ in different cultures, and how does this relate to the task of mission? (36)
- Does the present situation of rapid political and social change call for stronger mutual recognition between Baptists and Anglicans for the sake of the mission of God? If so, what forms might this take locally? (32)
- Do Anglicans understand how the passion for religious liberty can influence some forms of Baptist evangelism? (37-38). Do Baptists understand why Anglicans have tended to view the relationship between church and state more positively than Baptists? (39) How is it possible to observe the line between freedom to evangelize and proselytism? (37)

4. Baptism and the Process of Initiation

- Are Anglicans still working with the stereotype that Baptists regard baptism simply as a profession of faith, with no room for the activity of God’s grace? Are Baptists still working with the stereotype that Anglicans regard baptism simply an instance of the preventive grace of God, with no room for the exercise of faith? (41)
- Do Baptists understand the pain caused to Anglicans when people already baptized as infants are baptized as believers, thereby seeming to deny the validity of their own baptism and church membership? Do Anglicans understand the pain caused to Baptists, previously baptized as infants in another church, who are now asked to forgo a baptism which they understand to be a step of obedience to Christ - especially when their infant baptism led to no effective contact with the church community?
- Can Baptists and Anglicans agree that initiation - or the beginning of the Christian life - is not a single point but a process or journey within which baptism plays a part, and that the whole process includes a personal profession of faith? Can they see ways in which their own practice of baptism implies this? (42)
- In the light of the understanding of initiation given above, can Baptists understand the place that Anglicans give to infant baptism within the

Questions and Challenges

journey with which the Christian life begins? Might this also help Baptists in thinking through the theological reasons for the presentation (or blessing, or 'dedication') of infants?

- Anglicans will reject the practice of what they consider to be 're-baptism', while Baptists will be unhappy with the practice (where it happens) of baptizing infants whose parents have no continuing contact with the church. Should these circumstances be allowed to disturb a partnership in mission between Anglicans and Baptists? (cf. 51)
- What are the theological reasons for the Baptist practice of 'open membership' where it exists? Is it enough to base 'open membership' simply on the valuing of a profession of faith over all forms of baptism? Might recognizing a place for infant baptism in the whole 'journey of initiation' help to develop further Baptist thinking in this area? (48-50)
- How might the understanding of initiation as a process help Anglicans in thinking through the theological reasons for the practice of confirmation, or restoring it to its former importance? (44-5) Has any new thinking been done about confirmation to meet new ecumenical and cultural situations?

5. Membership of the Church

- How should a local church be defined and identified? Does the fact that Anglicans see the whole diocese as a 'local church' help to bring Baptists and Anglicans closer together in their view of the nature of the church? (54) Do we have to re-think the meaning of 'local church' in a social context in which communities are now fluid, and in which 'networks' of relationship may be more important than a geographical locality?
- How much do Baptist church members understand themselves to be members of the church universal, and does this give them a vision of the mission of God beyond their own locality? (55) Do Anglicans give sufficient attention to 'finding the mind of Christ' amongst the members in the local congregation?
- For Baptists, what is the difference between the secular word 'autonomy' and the biblical idea that each congregation has 'liberty' under the rule of Christ to order its life? (59) For Anglicans, can the process of 'receiving' synodical decisions by the local congregation be made more vital than it sometimes is? (60)
- Outside the parochial system of the Church of England, is there any real difference between Baptist and Anglican concepts of 'membership' of the

church? If the church is understood as a ‘gathered church’, how does this relate to the rest of society? (55-57)

- How is membership in the church related to baptism? Do any Baptists think that it is possible to be baptized and not be a ‘member’ of the church? Do Anglicans think that young infants are members in the same sense as confessing disciples?
- How does being a ‘member of the body of Christ’ relate to membership of a local church or single congregation? If you are Baptist, do you think that believing children, before they are baptized, are members of the body of Christ? If you are Anglican, do you think that all those who are baptized as infants remain members of the body of Christ, even if there is no contact at all with the church afterwards? (52-53) Does an understanding of initiation as a process, or journey, help to answer these questions?
- Is it possible in your region to share baptism and confirmation services between Anglicans and Baptists?

6. The Eucharist or Lord’s Supper

- How can we understand the ‘presence’ of Christ in the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper? Are there as many differences of understanding *within* Anglican and Baptist life as *between* Anglicans and Baptists? Should any differences of understanding prevent us from sharing in the Lord’s table together? (61-63)
- In the light of these conversations, should any Baptists continue to have a ‘closed table’, restricted only to those who have been baptized as believers? Were the participants in these conversations right to suppose that Anglicans everywhere offer eucharistic hospitality to those who are baptized in any trinitarian church? If not, why not? (66-67)
- Can Anglicans affirm that Christ can graciously come to nourish his people with his life in a Baptist Communion service, presided over by an ordained Baptist minister? Can they affirm this if a lay pastor presides at the table? (65) Should any Baptists feel inhibited from sharing in an Anglican communion because the person presiding is called a ‘priest’ and wears liturgical garments?
- Why do Anglican parishes differ in their views as to whether baptized children, before confirmation, can receive Holy Communion? In a Baptist church, can it ever be the practice for believing children to receive bread

Questions and Challenges

and wine before they are baptized? Can you place your answers in the context of understanding Christian initiation as a journey?

- What implications might a sharing in Holy Communion between Anglicans and Baptists have for other areas of church life?

7. *Episkope* or Oversight

- Can Anglicans and Baptists discern the same reality of *episkope* (pastoral oversight and responsibility) in each other's churches, despite differences in church structures? In particular, can Anglicans find the reality of *episkope* in Baptist churches even though there is no bishop in the Anglican understanding of this office?
- Can Baptists understand why Anglicans value highly the ministry of bishops as a sign of historical continuity between the church of the Apostles and the mission of the church today? (68, 77) Can Anglicans understand why Baptists want to insist that the basic ministry of oversight is that of the minister in the local congregation? (69)
- What do Baptists mean by the title 'bishop' in conventions where such offices have been appointed? In what ways is the Baptist trans-local or inter-church ministry (called variously 'regional minister', 'executive minister' or 'association/convention president') like an Anglican bishop, and how is it different? (70-71)
- Is it possible to regularize the act of ordination among Baptists, so that a minister with an inter-church ministry of oversight always presides? (76) What would be the theological reasons for this?
- In the conversations it was noted that there was a kind of 'flow' of oversight backwards and forwards between the communal and the personal. (69) How is this the same in Anglican and Baptist structures, and how does it differ?
- Somewhat different models of episcopacy from those in Europe are offered by the Church of North India (which includes former Baptists) and the Episcopal Churches of the USA; moreover, African concepts of leadership may point towards aspects of oversight unfamiliar in the West. (72-75) What other 'local adaptations' of episcopacy are evident already, or may be possible? Would any adaptation be acceptable to Baptists at present?

8. The Meaning of Recognition

- In the light of these conversations, are Baptists and Anglicans everywhere able to ‘see’ the presence of the one church of Jesus Christ in each other’s churches? How much can be built on this first step of ‘seeing’ what is apostolic within each other’s lives? (79-81) In what ways might it be publicly expressed? Is it desirable to move on to more formal recognition? (89)
- Should Baptists admit an inconsistency when they recognize Anglican churches as true, apostolic churches of Christ, while at the same time they give no place within the purposes of God to the baptism of infants in those churches? (84-86) If so, how should this inconsistency be resolved? Do answers to the questions about baptism, above, give any help in answering *this* question?
- Can Anglicans see ordained Baptist ministers as exercising an authentic ministry of word and sacrament which is being used by the Holy Spirit to nourish and build up the church of Christ? (82-83)
- How far are Baptists and Anglicans able to see each other’s churches as truly sharing in the apostolic mission? What might be the consequences for the way that evangelism and church-planting is carried out when they see each other in this way?

Part Two: Stories

5

Anglican-Baptist Partnership Around the World

Our conversations have revealed many points of contact and co-operation between Anglicans and Baptists across the globe. These have taken several different forms according to the circumstances of local mission, and the degree of warmth and compatibility felt between Anglican and Baptist structures. In this section, we present stories of some of the different ways in which Anglicans and Baptists have co-operated in the church's mission to live out and proclaim the gospel of Christ. Such co-operation ranges from informal conversations through to sharing in local congregations and co-operation in formally constituted ecumenical bodies, from partnership in theological education to sharing in action for mission. These are only examples, and many other stories could be told of similar situations. In North India there is, however, a unique context in which Christians from Anglican and Baptist backgrounds work together in a united church. The Republic of Georgia also offers an unusual situation of co-operation between Baptists in one country in Europe and Anglicans in another, with a resulting impact on relations between Baptists and the Orthodox Church. This story had a special place in the European round of conversations in Norwich, and deserves telling here.

Sharing in Informal Conversations: England

In the context of good local and personal relationships between Anglicans and Baptists in England, conversations took place from 1992 to 2005 between representatives of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and representatives of the Council for Christian Unity of the Church of England. Like the international conversations between the Anglican Communion and the BWA, these conversations were at the informal or exploratory level and were intended to lead to deeper mutual understanding and enhanced co-operation, rather than to a new formal relationship between the Baptist Union and the Church of England. The conversations made an interim report to their sponsoring bodies in 1999 and received encouragement to continue, with a focus on questions of Christian initiation and their practical implications at a local level.

These informal conversations have ranged over the chequered history of Anglican-Baptist relationships since the English Reformation, issues of historical continuity and discontinuity, the mission and evangelism agendas of the two communions, wider ecumenical relationships and agreements,

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

baptismal theology and practice, the opportunities and challenges of Local Ecumenical Partnerships, leadership and oversight, and what it might mean for Baptists and Anglicans to recognize one another's communities in an explicit way.

The final report of the conversations will be completed in 2005. It will go to the two sponsoring bodies, with a view to its being published and widely discussed among the churches. The report is structured in an unusual way. It is not an agreed text and the two communions are not going to be asked to endorse the text as such. It will not propose a new formal relationship, such as a covenant. It sets out parallel but interacting contributions from Baptist and Anglican scholars in three areas: the New Testament and credal expression 'one baptism'; apostolicity and the idea of mutual recognition; and continuity and structures of oversight. It also includes historical narrative, thought-provoking cameos and contemporary accounts of ways in which Anglicans and Baptists have related to each other, including in Local Ecumenical Partnerships.

The conversations have found it helpful to reflect on the idea of a total process of Christian initiation, within which various components - instruction in the faith and profession of it for oneself, baptism itself, confirmation with the laying on of hands, and admission to Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper - have an essential place, but with room for some variation in the order of events. The conversations have asked: can we see in each other's different practices the authentic pattern of Christian initiation? If so, what are the pastoral implications in local situations? In general, the language of 'seeing the presence of the one church of Jesus Christ in each other's churches' has been used rather than that of formal recognition. On the basis of this approach, the report poses a number of challenges that Baptists would put to Anglicans, that Anglicans would put to Baptists and that both Baptists and Anglicans alike need to face. It remains to be seen whether the two communions will take up the challenge and how they will respond.

Paul Avis,

General Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity of the Church of England

Sharing in a Council of Churches: Myanmar

The Anglican Church and the Baptist Convention in Myanmar have been members of the Myanmar Council of Churches since 1914. With the far-sighted vision of our forefathers, the two communions are able to see and respect each other as Christian communities. The bond of friendship and understanding among church leaders grows as they participate in the work of

the Council, especially in the effort since 1977 to study the document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* and, later on, other related papers on Faith and Order produced by the World Council of Churches. The outcome has been quite remarkable.

Co-operation and mutual recognition on the celebration of the two sacraments commanded by Jesus have been established, and the modes of baptism practised by both Churches have been accepted so that mutual acceptance of baptism draws us nearer to visible unity. Re-baptism is not encouraged; either baptism by immersion or confirmation, both in the context of the profession of faith, is required for those who wish to become full members of the church. Wherever there is an ecumenical gathering for worship, the Lima Liturgy is used for Holy Communion. Ordained leaders of both churches take part and Communion is open to the whole congregation. Where there is no ordained priest or pastor in one's respective church, the other church is willing to receive members of those churches for Communion. The Baptist Convention now regards the Nicene Creed as a foundation of its faith and some Baptist churches have even begun to recite the Creed in the Eucharist. With respect to ministry, both Anglican and Baptist churches practise ministry with reverence; they recognise the integrity of the order, and respect each other's part in it.

The understanding of holistic mission is encouraged and practised. Consequently the following projects are undertaken in many parts of our country: integrated development programmes (i.e. to help the poorest people), programmes to deal with HIV/AIDS, literacy programmes, and the raising of awareness on issues through a public relations committee.

The Anglican-Baptist International Conversations in their Asian Forum (2001) enhanced our *koinonia* so much that both communions agreed to form a committee looking forward to move on with our own conversation, with a common concern focussed on ecclesiology, especially in the area of our worship.

Samuel San Si Htay,
Archbishop of Myanmar

Sharing in Witness to Society: The Republic of Georgia

'I want to say to you Baptists to live out that Christian face in your daily work, in your daily living and in building strong relationships with other Christian churches. The work is too enormous for one denomination to take on a task alone.' This was a part of homily delivered by the Archbishop of

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

Canterbury, Dr George Carey, in Tbilisi, Georgia at the Cathedral Baptist Church in 1993. Out of the visit came two immediate results. The Church Missionary Society was asked by the Archbishop to work in Georgia with Baptists and Orthodox. He also asked the Revd Stephen Platten, his Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs, to help Georgian Baptists to secure rights to translate and publish C.S. Lewis' books in Georgia. Later on the Secretary became the Dean of Norwich and then Bishop of Wakefield. Both Norwich Cathedral and the Diocese of Wakefield have become heavily engaged in Baptist-Anglican relations in Georgia.

These links between Baptists and Anglicans have proved to be very important for both sides, and for Baptist-Orthodox relations in Georgia. 'We have learnt a great deal about ourselves and about a broader understanding of Christianity through our links in Georgia', says the Rt Revd Stephen Platten: 'It has enriched the life of the Anglican Church both at Norwich Cathedral and in the Diocese of Wakefield.' The Baptist Church of Georgia has also benefited from the support of the Anglican Church in several areas of its mission.

Human rights and politics

Georgian Baptists have been heavily involved in the human rights movement in Georgia. They have been particularly concerned about violations of religious rights. They believe that by their fight they contribute to the democratization of the formerly communist Georgian society. In their struggle for democracy, civil society and religious liberty, Georgian Baptists have always been supported by Anglicans. At times of persecution and suffering the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Stephen Platten, and numerous Anglican friends of Georgian Baptists have been among the first to raise their voice against violence at national and European level. Successive British Ambassadors to Georgia have been encouraged by Anglican friends to back up, and sometimes even protect, Georgian Baptists in times of turmoil.

After the 'Revolution of Roses', attempts to give new political stability and growth to the country have made a situation where political support for Baptists is very important. Bishop Stephen Platten's visit to Georgia in 2004 and his meetings with the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Minister of Justice and a number of other government ministers and officials is a clear example of giving such support. At every occasion the Anglican Bishop was accompanied by the Georgian Baptist Bishop, and both addressed issues that have to be taken into consideration by the new Georgian government. The co-operation between Anglicans and Baptists strengthens the political witness of

Georgia's Baptists and enables them to represent a prophetic voice in this post-communist society.

Local ecumenical relations

After the withdrawal of the Georgian Orthodox Church of Georgia from the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical organizations in 1997, the Orthodox Church became isolated from the rest of the Christian communities. Georgian Baptists have undertaken a responsibility to facilitate the process of softening the anti-ecumenical atmosphere in the country. This is why the Georgian Baptists are keen to help the Orthodox to be engaged in relations with Anglicans. 'The Baptist Church acts as one of the key links with western churches not only for itself but also for the Georgian Orthodox', writes Bishop Stephen Platten. The Baptist Church of Georgia has indeed helped Georgian Orthodox priests and laity to travel to England and to get to know the ministries of the Church of England, which has certainly contributed to the raising of the ecumenical spirit in the Georgian Orthodox Church.

Every other year a delegation of Baptists and Orthodox from Georgia go to England, and every alternate year an Anglican delegation comes to Georgia. This has been happening for a number of years and has made a great impact on Georgian-British relations. This is really a way of giving Georgians - Baptist and Orthodox - and English Anglicans insight into one another's culture by making new friends every year, and by learning about the spirituality of another Christian denomination. In this context, the Diocese of Wakefield is planning to take two Georgians, one Orthodox one Baptist, to be trained for pastoral ministry in Mirfield, at the Community of the Resurrection. Two other persons will be going from Baptist and Orthodox communities to be trained in prison chaplaincy.

Mission projects

In Soviet times churches were deprived of the right to be officially involved in social ministries. After the break up of the Soviet Union Georgian Baptists found themselves involved in a wide scale humanitarian and relief work in Georgia. Along with German Baptists the Anglicans have been most instrumental in reaching out to the poor and destitute. The Church Missionary Society and Norwich Cathedral, for example, helped the Georgian Baptists to serve refugees from Chechnya; they organized fund raising campaigns throughout the UK.

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

With the support of the British Embassy the Anglican International Links Group sent to Georgia a retired senior police officer from East Anglia, to help the Georgian government develop a strategy for Prison and Army chaplaincy, with the assistance of Georgian Baptists and Orthodox.

The Baptist Church in Georgia is building a multi-purpose Ecumenical Center in Tbilisi. It will accommodate the home for the elderly, other social projects, various schools and Baptist Headquarters. A number of Georgia's Anglican friends made contribution to different parts of the huge building facilities. Anglicans have also been very supportive, along with German Baptists, of the School of Elijah in Tbilisi; this school has been training 60 men and women who are already involved in church ministry in one way or another.

The liturgical and theological dimension

One of the most obvious symbols of relations between the two churches is an icon of the baptism of Christ, painted by the Baptist School of Iconography and placed in the baptismal bay in Norwich Cathedral. The icon is a copy of a larger mural fresco from the Cathedral Baptist Church in Tbilisi.

One of the reasons Anglicans feel comfortable with Georgian Baptists is the liturgical style that has been developed by the Baptists. Georgian Baptist liturgy has been enriched by some of the characteristics of Orthodoxy. Unlike many other Baptists they have used the sacred arts in liturgy, since for them all the five senses of a human being have a right to participate in worship. Yet the Georgian Baptist Church is very different from the Orthodox Church. Within the framework of the beautiful Eastern liturgy it offers a freedom and spontaneity. Anglicans and Baptists do learn a lot from each other's liturgical and theological traditions. Bishop Stephen Platten suggests that 'Anglicans can learn something of the importance of the Baptist tradition in terms of initiation and membership of the Christian church.' On the other hand Georgian Baptists have become serious about the Anglican threefold stress on scripture, tradition and reason. One thing that helps Georgian Baptists and British Anglicans to co-operate is their similar practice of a threefold ministry: bishops, presbyters, deacons. That has also proved to be helpful for ecumenical dialogue with other traditional churches as well.

Both for Baptists and Anglicans the relations between them have turned into life-changing experiences. 'Anglicans are not very open about their faith and inclined to hide their true feelings', wrote a member of the Anglican-Baptist core group. 'That is something we should learn from you, to be true witness-

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

es without inhibitions, but that is very hard for some of us. It is only recently that I have told people I am praying for them.’ Georgian Baptists and British Anglicans are determined to continue their co-operation in mission as a common Christian witness to the changing society in Europe and in the world. We are different: *therefore* we should work together.

*Malkhaz Songulashvili,
Bishop of the Baptist Union of Georgia*

Sharing in Local Ecumenical Partnerships: England

Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) are a particularly interesting example of ecumenical co-operation and collaboration in England. They take their place in an ecumenical context that is quite advanced, nationally, regionally and locally.

There is ecumenical co-operation at national level through the national ecumenical instrument, Churches Together in England (CTE) and bodies such as the Evangelical Alliance, which has considerable numerical strength and a significant voice. There are also local and regional Churches Together groups with their own ecumenical officers. LEPs are the most local formal expression of the ecumenical movement.

For the Church of England, formal ecumenical arrangements are governed by the ‘ecumenical canons’ (B 43 and B 44), the former referring to occasional activities and the latter dealing with LEPs. There are many hundreds of LEPs in England: in 2003, of the 852 LEPs, 228 involved Baptist churches and 612 involved Anglicans. They range from the most tightly knit - a single congregation, sharing a building - to the more loosely defined where a number of local churches enter into a ‘covenant partnership’.

The aim of the LEP concept is for the participating churches to share their distinctive traditions and to work ‘as one’ in a local situation without legally becoming one church. Worship may rotate through the traditions represented, with the rite taking its identity from the denomination of the president, or a special agreed liturgy may be approved by the sponsoring body (which represents the oversight structures of the participating churches). Thus, in a single-congregation LEP, one week Anglicans may participate in a Baptist Communion service, and the next week Baptists in an Anglican Eucharist. This means that, as far as Anglicans are concerned, LEPs do not bring about true interchangeability of ministries, nor do they achieve full canonical communion. Baptists, for their part, tend to see LEPs as representing a somewhat higher level of mutual recognition. Ministers of all Christian denominations

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

(including Anglicans) who serve Baptist congregations in an LEP, for example, are recognized as full voting members of the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

It has to be said, however, that many LEPs have a sense of unity and fellowship that can become impatient of denominational ties. LEPs have pioneered the concrete expression of local unity, but they are often torn between the desire to push at the boundaries and the duty of loyalty to their parent church. The tensions in single congregation LEPs come out in the areas of church government and oversight, Christian initiation, ecumenical confirmation, membership issues, and the place of children within the church.

A significant development has been multiple membership, when someone newly coming to faith within a single-congregation LEP can be baptized (for the first time), confirmed and received simultaneously into full membership of all the various Christian communions involved in the LEP. Someone may, for example, be baptized as a believer and accepted into Baptist membership, and at the same time be confirmed by the bishop and accepted as a member of the Church of England. Multiple membership lasts only as long as the persons holding it attend the LEP; on moving to another church they choose with which denomination they would like to remain in membership. 'Extended membership' allows someone who came into an LEP as a member of one Christian communion to extend this membership to all the other participating denominations; on leaving the LEP, he or she returns to the single membership held beforehand.

There are currently 175 LEPs, of all types, that involve Baptists and Anglicans together. In most cases these involve other denominations alongside them, including the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the United Reformed Church, and the small Moravian Church; the Roman Catholic Church may also share the building (but not the congregation) in single congregation LEPs, and may participate in an LEP where several individual congregations are sharing in a local covenant. The flagship LEP, the 'Church of Christ the Cornerstone' in the new town of Milton Keynes, embraces all five major denominations using one building. Trinity Baptist Church in Chesham, on the other hand, is in covenant partnership with the Church of England parish and with the Methodist and United Reformed churches in the town, though each retains its own congregation and building. To take another variation, in Wendover Free Church there is one congregation of Baptists and United Reformed, which has a covenanted relation with the Church of England parish church and which shares its buildings with the Roman Catholic parish.

There are 13 LEPs which involve only Baptists and Anglicans, and of these nine are Anglican-Baptist partnerships in a single congregation. For example, Grange Park Church in Northampton was planted by Baptists on a new housing development on the edge of the town and was joined soon afterwards by Anglicans from a town-centre parish.

Although LEPs represent the ecumenism of exception, the difficulties sometimes associated with them should not be exaggerated. The flexibility offered by the various types of LEP is helpful. They bring together Christians from different traditions in a uniquely challenging and fruitful way. Many LEPs have local mission at their heart: they stand as a sign to the churches that working together in mission and evangelism is possible and indeed imperative.

Paul Avis,

General Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity of the Church of England.

Sharing in Theological Education: The Caribbean

In the Caribbean, where faith communities extend from and include islands stretching from the southern coast of Florida in the United States of America, to the continental countries of Central and South America, theological education has been seen as a challenge of 'contextualisation'. Some have seen it as a process that must go on at the most basic level of the Christian community, as well as in the formal academic setting of the seminary.

In 1961 there was general agreement between the Christian denominations on the need for wider co-operation in ministerial training, and the need to associate this training with the regional presence throughout the area of the University of the West Indies. By 1964 the churches of the English-speaking peoples of the Caribbean had established a united ecumenical theological education for the area, through the birth of the United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI).

Historically speaking, Caribbean theology is indelibly marked by the region's experience with colonialism and the slave society. The church came to the Caribbean in attendance on the colonizing powers and with a missionary outlook that often equated Christianity with 'civilizing'. Thus, it is understandable that the primary focus of Caribbean theology has been the experience of the majority black population whose slave ancestors were torn from their native land, cut off from ancestral ties and cultural roots and yet, nevertheless, survived the most inhuman conditions. Christian faith was at first expressed in forms of creed, belief and worship which seemed unrelated to

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

the everyday life of the people. The theology of this region was thus bound to take a form of 'emancipation or liberation theology'.

The earliest attempts at theological education in the Caribbean represented a definite denominational initiative. The Anglican Church established its own seminary in Barbados (Codrington College), and the Baptists founded Calabar College in Jamaica. In addition, the Presbyterians and Moravians had their seminaries in Jamaica, and the Lutherans in Guyana; later the Anglicans created a seminary in Jamaica as well. It is not surprising, therefore, that early references to the development of theological education in the Caribbean saw it as involving a process of ministerial formation intended to provide denominationally-oriented pastors for the 'native' population of ex-slaves in the rural communities of the post-emancipation period. In this multi-faceted environment, the motivating force behind the birth of a united theological education in the Caribbean became the need to train a body of Christian leaders for the creation of a new society. They should, it was thought, be equally equipped to meet the needs of each segment of that society. The birth of UTCWI, involving as it does the co-operation of all denominations of the region, including the integration into UTCWI of the Baptist and Anglican colleges in Jamaica, thus marked a new phase in theological education in the Caribbean.

The formation of UTCWI has provided fertile ground for the exploration of a serious shift in ministerial formation to exemplify the 'priesthood of all believers'. UTCWI seeks to provide theological education not only for those persons seeking ordination but also for those concerned with the general ministry of the whole church as lay persons. Much that was earlier considered ministerial preparation alone is now also offered to lay persons as a means of empowering both lay and ordained to understand the relationship between these two segments of the church. In its widened ecumenical context the College has expanded its offerings to include courses in pastoral care and field education, the latter of which is intended to provide supervised, yet 'contextualised', learning experiences for those in the process of ministerial formation while working in the actual arena or context of human suffering and crises.

After the political failure to create a West Indies Federation in 1961, the various churches which came together to form UTCWI determined that the churches should be the vehicle for the unification and development of Caribbean society, and that this task would be best undertaken as an ecumenical effort. UTCWI thus represents a refreshing ecumenical approach for

the sake of the wholeness of society. While there are still denominational colleges for ministerial formation, it is now more increasingly recognized that the bridging of denominational barriers is expressive of the unity and *koinonia* of the body of Christ for which our Lord prayed. Further, UTCWI represents a reasoned approach to the stewardship of the limited resources of various branches of the church in the Caribbean. It may rightly be claimed that the College has changed the face of theological education in the Caribbean, and represents a truly ecumenical attempt to strengthen the mission of the churches to Caribbean peoples.

*Mrs Rubie Nottage,
Chancellor of the Province of the West Indies*

Sharing in a United Church: North India

Testimony has been received from three bishops in the Church of North India, two from a Baptist and one from an Anglican background, about participation in the life of their united church by Christians from both traditions. The Church of North India is unique in the sense that it is the only united church in the world where Baptists have entered the union, and so the experience of these bishops is of particular interest.

The Rt Revd P.K. Samantaroy, Bishop of Amritsar (Baptist background) writes:

The fact that I came from Baptist church background and am now serving in the Diocese of Amritsar (previously Anglican) in the Church of North India is amazing. I grew up in a non-episcopal church in Orissa prior to the church union. As a child I had never seen an Anglican church as almost all churches in eastern Orissa belonged to the Baptist tradition. After the formation of CNI the late J.K. Mohanty, a Baptist minister, became the first bishop in Orissa. [Several Baptist unions had joined the CNI in 1970. In Orissa, five of the six Oriya-speaking bishops came from a Baptist background, and one from the Presbyterian. Three of these bishops are serving outside Orissa at present, two in fully ex-Presbyterian congregations, one in a majority ex-Anglican area and two are still serving in Orissa.]

To most Baptists, episcopacy was a strange phenomenon and therefore unacceptable. This caused division in the Church and many individual congregations withdrew from the church union. But my mother church remained united with the Diocese. It was only when I went for my theological studies at Serampore College that I was exposed to various other church structures and traditions and came to know (mostly theoretically) about the Anglican Church. During my work as a minister in the Cuttack Diocese I had the

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

opportunity to serve two congregations that were Anglican prior to the formation of CNI, and it was during those days that I became familiarized with the Anglican order of worship. When I was appointed as the bishop of Amritsar Diocese I was quite apprehensive not only because I was coming to serve in another state with different language and culture but also because Amritsar Diocese was for a long time a stronghold of Anglicanism and I had so little experience of the Anglican Church. But after spending more than four and half years as a bishop here I feel my experience quite gratifying and my work challenging.

In my experience Baptist and Anglican co-operation can bring positive changes in at least four areas. The first two are those of worship and empowerment of the laity, which are linked. Baptist churches in India have developed their own forms and methods of worship out of their interaction with the local culture. The singing of the hymns written by Indians, use of Indian musical instruments and roles played by the elders and deacons help the people to develop indigenous Christian spirituality. In general the life in a Baptist congregation is centred on the congregation and not on the clergy. In my diocese I observe that most congregations have adopted certain cultural elements of this region, yet the clergy dominate the life in a congregation and the lay people play a very passive role. The style of worship is still largely western. This needs to be changed. Inclusion of items such as extempore prayer and sharing of testimony can make the worship more creative and meaningful. We have been conducting workshops on liturgy and music to learn new ways.

The church belongs to the people and they should own it. Because of the clergy-centredness the lay people have seemed to be shying away from active involvement. It is therefore necessary to focus on ministerial formation among the men and women of the congregations so that lay people are empowered to understand, own and participate in the mission and ministry of the church. This will make the church vibrant and self-reliant. The Diocese has already been conducting ministerial formation training programmes mainly for rural folk.

Third, something has been learned from the Anglican side about administration. The office of Archdeacon in the Anglican Church was taking care of the mundane jobs that allowed the Bishop to focus on pastoral care and other important work. This office was done away with in the CNI structure. As a result the bishops find themselves doing more jobs of administration than the main work for which they are appointed. Realising this as a problem area we, in the Amritsar Diocese, have appointed an administrator to take care of the internal administration. This is proving to be a great help.

Finally there is the place of the bishop in the life of the church. As I have mentioned earlier, the Baptist churches, after joining the CNI, got a bishop as the leader of the church in their area. Though initially there was a lot of resentment, gradually people began to see the bishop as a symbol of unity. The introduction of bishop's office has also enhanced the image of the church among the general public.

The Rt Revd A.K. Pradhan, Bishop of Marathwada (Anglican background) writes:

Prior to the formation of the Church of North India there were four Anglican churches within the jurisdiction of Cuttack Diocese which had a long history of existence, witness and service. The first church here was the church of the Epiphany and the second was St Stephen's Church at Behrampur. The members of St Stephen's church at Behrampur had continuous interaction with the members of the Baptist church and this was basically due to their kinship with each other. At no point of time was there any kind of theological tension as far as questions of doctrine were concerned. The only difference that existed among them concerned the tradition of infant baptism and the liturgical order of worship.

The justification of infant baptism among those of Anglican background in this area is given by the tradition of confirmation, where each candidate having received infant baptism is expected to assert the baptismal promises, which were given on their behalf by the parents and godparents. Hence infant baptism along with confirmation is essential for a candidate to become the member of an *ecclesia*. We think that in the Baptist tradition the dedication of a child is quite similar to that of infant baptism in the Anglican tradition. St Stephen's Church at Behrampur created history by providing a baptismal pool for adults to be baptized by immersion in water. This act of generosity came spontaneously during the late 1970s in response to the request from people coming from Baptist and other backgrounds.

Christians from a Baptist tradition tended to be against liturgical worship, mainly because they wanted to have free and extempore prayer as against the written prayers. However, if we analyze their free prayer, we find that its content resembles the written prayers closely. Thus there is not much difference between free and written prayer and argument remains valid only on the ground of the mode of the prayers.

In general, the Anglicans had a greater respect for their presbyter and greater acceptance of him as their chairman or president of the congregation and the pastorate committee. By contrast, the Baptists were not very keen to have their presbyter as the president on their council. But with the formation of the

Anglican-Baptist Partnership

Church of North India most of the members coming from a Baptist background have changed their views, and the remaining are on the way to change their opinion.

The Rt Revd D. K. Sahu, Bishop of Eastern Himalaya until 2005, now General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in India (Baptist background) writes:

The formation of the united church and the ongoing journey of 33 years itself is a living experience of witness of co-operation in the history of the ecumenical movement. The basis of union is 'the church's dependence on God', which might appear obvious, but the insight of this basis is that one does not have to justify one's denominational position but to seek from God the full expression of truth. Therefore the Church of North India acknowledges the practice of two forms of baptism, but not at the cost of each contradicting the other. The ministry in the united church has been carried out on the basis of a shared identity incorporating the best elements of six traditions including that of Baptists and the Anglicans.

Any talk of co-operation among Baptists and Anglicans must first address the issue of understanding the nature and function of episcopacy. The 'modified' form of episcopate was a desirable element in the ordering of church life in the united church. Therefore it is again and again emphasized among us that one of the important tasks is to help local congregations to understand their real nature as local manifestations of the full reality of the catholic church.

The major issues that need to be addressed in the context of co-operation are the questions of identity and partnership, which unfortunately tend to be addressed at the surface to keep the dialogue going for the sake of dialogue. A call for introspection on the part of either partner in a dialogue would demand a radical questioning of one's self-understanding in relation to the other, and only then will co-operation be a living reality.

6

Conclusion to the Report: 'Sharing in the apostolic mission'

This report began by remarking that these conversations throughout the world have not fitted into the usual pattern of ecumenical conversations. While not 'formal talks' on the way to visible union, in their range and content they have been more than simply 'getting to know you' exercises. They have also made a thorough effort at contextualization of the issues discussed, through drawing on many regional participants. The account of the conversations has shown another way they have broken an accepted pattern, and made something of an experiment. The participants have taken seriously the 'first stages' of conversation, rather than seeing these as necessary preliminaries ('talks about talks') to be hastened through as quickly as possible. Formal recognition, in the sense of mutual recognition between Baptist unions or conventions and Anglican provinces is not in prospect at the moment, since accepted procedures have not yet been embarked upon; but, given this situation, the conversations have stretched the possibilities that lie within informal and practical acceptance of each other at this time. This has been, in the words of one objective of the talks, to 'increase our fellowship and common witness to the Gospel' (objective 4).

The participants have thus tested out the potential within what might be called '*seeing* the presence of the one church of Jesus Christ in each other's churches', which involves '*seeing each other as*' standing within the apostolic tradition, preaching the apostolic gospel and sharing in the apostolic mission. They have concluded that much can be built upon this approach. The final section of the report ('The Meaning of Recognition') does explore an unfolding process through which the two communions might seek an increasing sense of mutual recognition in the future, if this is desired, but it also registers what is possible within an existing unity in Christ here and now.

As far as confessing the apostolic faith is concerned, those engaged in these conversations were satisfied that Baptists and Anglicans share 'one faith', and that there is every reason to share together in God's mission to the world. Despite the fact that one communion is episcopal and synodical in nature, and the other is congregational and associational, the conversations show that there is also a greater closeness than might have been expected in the understanding of such matters as the ministry of oversight and the relation of the local congregation to the universal church. Despite considerable differences

Sharing in the apostolic mission

of emphasis in some places, the participants found that each communion was committed to a full range of mission and evangelism, from proclamation of the good news of Christ to practical care for the individual, the society and creation. The western members of the group, however, accepted the judgement of those from the South and East that this holistic view of the gospel had, tragically, not always been communicated by missionary enterprises in the past, whether by Baptists or Anglicans.

While there was a good deal of convergence on the meaning and benefits of the Eucharist or Lord's Supper, considerable differences about baptism remain, and especially about the practice that Anglicans deprecate as 're-baptism'. These have not been resolved, but the members of the conversations think that a first step is better mutual understanding of each other's perspective, which might be achieved by seeing baptism as part of a larger process of initiation, or one stage on a journey of beginning in the Christian life.

The next phase in these conversations will, it is hoped, happen among the many congregations of Baptists and Anglicans dispersed throughout the world, who are encouraged to address the questions and challenges provided in the report. In particular, it is hoped that those who participated in the conversations at the regional level (see Appendix A) will respond to this invitation. The nature of the 'continuing forum at the world level' envisaged by the Lambeth Conference will be largely shaped by responses received. The questions might simply be used as a basis for discussion of the report by study-groups in churches and theological colleges, but it is hoped that responses will also be sent to the offices of either the Baptist World Alliance or the Anglican Communion. These can be addressed, through the respective offices, to either of the Co-Chairmen of the Continuation Committee.

In each of the regional meetings the wish was expressed for increased recognition of the historical and theological integrity that underlies each of these world communions, Baptist and Anglican. There was also a strong desire for what had been achieved in the meetings to be extended into more occasions for shared worship and working together. Each meeting ended, as does this report, with a sense of gratitude to God for each other's story.

Appendices

A. Participants in the International Conversations

The Continuation Committee

The Revd Dr Paul S. Fiddes (Baptist, Co-Chairman, England) *
The Revd Dr Bruce Matthews (Anglican, Co-Chairman, Canada) *

*The Director of Ecumenical Affairs, Anglican Consultative Council
(Co-Secretary):*

The Revd Canon David Hamid (2000-2002)
The Rt Revd John Baycroft (2003)
The Revd Canon Gregory Cameron (2003-2005) *

The Director of Study and Research, Baptist World Alliance (Co-Secretary):

The Revd L.A. (Tony) Cupit*

The Revd Prebendary Dr Paul Avis (Anglican, England) *
The Most Revd Samuel San Si Htay (Anglican: 2000-2001, Myanmar)
The Revd Canon Alyson Mary Barnett-Cowan (Anglican: 2002-2003, Canada)
Chancellor Rubie Nottage (Anglican: 2003-2005, Bahamas) *

The Revd Dr Ken Manley (Baptist, Australia) *
The Revd Dr Timothy George (Baptist: 2000-2001, USA)
The Revd Dr Malcolm B. Yarnell (Baptist: 2002-2004, USA)

* Those responsible for the final text of the report.

1. Europe: Norwich, England 21-25 September 2000

Anglican:

The Revd Dr Timothy Bradshaw (England)
Dr Martin Davie (England)
Mr Charles Gore (Scotland)
The Revd Susan Huyton (Wales)
Mr Dermot O'Callaghan (Ireland)
The Revd Andrew Sully (Wales)

Baptist:

The Revd Gethin Abraham-Williams (Wales)
The Revd Myra Blyth (England)
The Revd Dr Christopher J. Ellis (England)
The Revd Anna Maffei (Italy)
The Revd Dr Kenneth Roxburgh (Scotland)
The Revd Dr Karl Heinz Walter (Germany)

Appendices

2. Asia & Oceania: Yangon, Myanmar 18-21 January 2001

Anglican:

The Revd Andrew Chan (Hong Kong, People's Republic of China)
The Revd Simon Biben Htoo (Myanmar)
The Revd Andrew Zaw Lwin (Myanmar)
The Revd David Powys (Australia)
The Revd Dr Jeremiah Guen Seok Yang (Republic of Korea)

The Church of North India (Anglican Communion):

The Rt Revd Samuel R. Cutting (Agra)
The Rt Revd Dr Dharendra Kumar Sahu (Eastern Himalaya)

Baptist:

Mrs Young Shim Chang (Republic of Korea)
The Revd Dr Simon Pau Khan En (Myanmar)
The Revd Jill Manton (Australia)
The Revd Dr J. Maung Lat (Myanmar)
The Revd P. Bonny Resu (India)
Dr Anna May Say Pa (Myanmar)

3. Africa: Nairobi, Kenya 24-27 January 2002

Anglican:

The Revd Dr Victor R. Atta-Baffoe (Ghana)
The Rt Revd Dr Nolbert Kunonga (Zimbabwe)
The Rt Revd Valentino Mokiwa (Tanzania)
The Revd Hannington Mutebi (Uganda)
The Revd Chalton Ochola (Kenya)
The Rt Revd Nicholas Dikeriehi Okoh (Nigeria)
The Revd Linda Schwartz (South Africa)

Baptist:

The Revd Dr Frank Adams (Ghana)
The Revd Chamunorwa H. Chiromo (Zimbabwe)
Dr Louise Kretzschmar (South Africa)
The Revd Dr Douglas W. Waruta (Kenya)

4. The Southern Cone: Santiago, Chile 22-24 January 2003

Anglican:

The Revd Carlos Enrique Lainfiesta (Central America)
The Revd Jerson Darif Palhano (Brazil)
Mrs Ione Walbaum (Chile)
The Rt Revd Héctor Zavala (Chile)

Baptist:

The Revd Zachueue Rebecca Contreras (Chile)
The Revd Dr Alberto Prokopchuk (Argentina)
Dr Amparo de Medina (Colombia)
The Revd Dr Tomás Mackey (Argentina)
The Revd Dr Zaqueu Moreira de Oliveira (Brazil)
The Revd Josué Fonseca (Chile)

5. The Caribbean: Nassau, Bahamas 26-28 January 2003

Anglican:

The Ven Ranfurly Brown (Bahamas)
The Revd Burnet Cherisol (Haiti)
The Very Revd Knolly Clarke (Trinidad & Tobago)
The Most Revd Drexel W. Gomez (Bahamas)
The Rt Revd Schon Goodridge (Windward Isles)
Dr Monrelle Williams (Barbados)

Baptist:

The Revd Dr Cawley Bolt (Jamaica)
The Revd Dr Neville Callam (Jamaica)
The Revd Peter Pinder (Bahamas)
Mrs Beth Stewart (Bahamas)
The Revd Dr William Thompson (Bahamas)

**6. North America: Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada
10-13 September, 2003**

Anglican:

The Revd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan (Canada)
Dr Howard Loewen (USA)
The Revd Canon Sandra Richardson (USA)
Chancellor Ronald Stevenson (Canada)
The Rt Revd Douglas Theuner (USA)
The Revd Dr David Wheeler (Baptist, representing ECUSA)

Baptist:

The Revd Dr William Brackney (USA)
The Revd Dr Curtis Freeman (USA)
The Revd Dr Steve Harmon (USA)
Mrs Audrey Morikawa (Canada)
The Revd Alan Stanford (USA)
The Revd Dr Andrew MacRae (Canada)

B. Papers Given at the Regional Meetings

* indicates that the paper is in written form, and that it might be possible to obtain a copy from the author.

1. Norwich, England

Timothy Bradshaw, 'Some Distinctive Features of the Church of England'. *

Martin Davie, 'The Church of England Story'. *

Charles Gore, 'A short presentation on the Scottish Episcopal Church'.

Kenneth Roxburgh, 'A short presentation on Baptist Churches in Scotland'.

Dermot O'Callaghan, 'A short presentation on the Church of Ireland'.

Andrew Sully and Susan Huyton, 'A short presentation on the Church in Wales'.

Myra Blyth, 'A short presentation on the Baptist Union of Great Britain'.

Karl Heinz Walter, 'A short presentation on Baptist churches in Germany'.

Anna Maffei, 'Baptists in Italy'.

Paul S. Fiddes 'A particular faith? Distinctive features of Christian faith and practice held by Baptist Christians in Europe'. *

Chris Ellis 'A View from the Pool. Baptists, Sacraments and the Basis of Unity'. *

Tony Peck, 'The European Baptist Federation since 1989'. *

Paul Avis, 'Some Historical Notes Related to Anglican-Baptist relations'.

Gethin Abraham-Williams, 'Some Future Challenges to Anglican-Baptist Relations'.

Stephen Platten, 'The Partnership between the Diocese of Norwich and the Baptist Convention of Georgia'.

2. Yangon, Myanmar

Andrew Chan, 'An Overview of Anglican Life in Asia'. *

Bonny-Resu, 'An Overview of Baptist Life in Asia'.

Thra Wilfred Saw Aung Hla Tun, Samuel Mahn San Si Htay, Mark Saw Maung Doe, Simon Salai Be Bib Htu, Andrew Mahn Zaw Lwin, 'A brief outline of Anglican History in Myanmar and the Contact between the Anglican Church and the Baptist Church in Myanmar'. *

Baptist participants from Myanmar, 'The Myanmar Baptist Convention'. *

Ken Manley, 'We Baptists ... A statement of Baptist identity'.

Jill Manton, 'Baptist Ecclesiology in the Australian Context'. *

Bruce Kaye, 'Unity in the Anglican Communion: A Critique of the Virginia Report' * [confidential]. Paper read and presented by David Powys.

S.R. Cutting, 'Union Between the Anglicans and the Baptists in the Church of North India'. *

Dhirendra K. Sahu, 'Episcopacy in the Church of North India'. *

3. Nairobi, Kenya

Nolbert Kunonga 'The African Face of Anglicanism: An Overview of Anglican Life in Africa'.

Nolbert Kunonga, 'Infant Baptism in the Church of Central Africa'.

Frank Adams, 'An Overview of Baptist Life in Africa'.

Douglas Waruta, 'Baptism in an African Context'.

Chalton S. Ochola, 'Issues Arising in Local Anglican-Baptist Relations; An Anglican View from Kenya'. *

Louise Kretzschmar, 'Baptist-Anglican Interaction in South Africa: a Baptist View'.

Victor R. Atta-Baffoe, 'Mission and Ministry in the African Church'. *

4. Santiago, Chile

Alberto Prokopchuk, 'Los Bautistas A Traves de America Latina' (Baptists Throughout Latin America). *

Héctor Zavala (Chile), **Carlos Lainfiesta** (Guatemala), **Jerson Darif Palhano** (Brazil), 'Anglican Life in Latin America and Central America'.

Héctor Zavala, 'Identidad Anglicana' (Anglican Identity). *

Amparo de Medina, 'Identidad Bautista en America Latina' (Baptist Identity in Latin America). *

Zaqueu Moreira de Oliveira, 'The Baptists: Historical Versions of their Origin'. *

Tomás Mackey, 'Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission in Latin America: a Baptist Perspective'. *

Carlos Lainfiesta, 'Evangelismo, Proselitismo y Mision en America Latina' (Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission in Latin America: an Anglican Perspective). *

Josué Fonseca, 'The Ministry of Pastoral Oversight: with reference to responses from the Region to Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry'. *

5. Nassau, Bahamas

Rubie Nottage, 'Anglican Life in the Caribbean'. *

Peter Pinder, 'Baptist Life in the Caribbean'. *

William Thompson, 'Religious History in the Bahamas'. *

Appendices

Cawley Bolt, 'Colonialism, Liberation and the Mission of the Church in the Caribbean: A Baptist View'. *

Sean Goodridge, 'Colonialism, Liberation and the Mission of the Church in the Caribbean: An Anglican View'. *

Monrelle Williams, 'Anglican Identity: Expressing and Confessing the Christian Faith in Worship, Teaching and Evangelism'. *

William Thompson, 'Baptist Identity: Expressing and Confessing the Christian Faith in Worship and Evangelism'. *

Neville Callam, 'Eucharistic Theology'. *

6. Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada

Alan Stanford, 'An Overview of Baptists in North America'. *

Thomas Ferguson, 'Anglican Life and Continuity in North America' * (read and presented by Sandra Richardson).

William Brackney, 'Baptists and Continuity'. *

David Wheeler, 'Keeping the Faith, Keeping Together: Common Challenges for Baptists and Anglicans'. *

Malcolm B. Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism: Developments in Southern Baptist Understandings of the Nature and Role of the Churches'. *

Stephen R. Harmon, 'Baptist Understandings of Authority, with Special Reference to Baptists in North America'. *

Ronald C. Stevenson, 'An Anglican Understanding of Authority'. *

NOTES

Where no other details are given, references to papers are to those listed in Appendix B.

1. Lambeth 1998, Section IV, Called to Be One (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1999), Resolution IV.15 (p.45).
2. In Anglican ecclesiology, the local church is understood, strictly speaking, as being constituted at the diocesan level. A church, in this understanding, is the gathering of the people of God around their bishop. However, classically and more pragmatically, Anglicanism has tended to use the national level as the definitive level of church organization. In this, it was probably influenced both by Orthodox ecclesiological polity, and by the constraints of Reformation realpolitik.
3. The Church of Ireland was united with the Church of England between 1800 and 1869.
4. Timothy Bradshaw, 'Some Distinctive Features of the Church of England', p.1.
5. Martin Davie, 'The Church of England Story', p.1.
6. Thra Wilfred Saw Aung Hla Tun, Samuel Mahn Si Htay and others, 'A Brief Outline of Anglican History in Myanmar and the Contact between the Anglican Church and the Baptist Church in Myanmar', p.1.
7. Ibid., p.2.
8. Andrew Chan, 'An Overview of Anglican Life in Asia', p.1.
9. Héctor Zavala, 'Identidad Anglicana', pp.1-2.
10. 'The Myanmar Baptist Convention' by Baptist participants in the conversations in Yangon, p.4.
11. William H. Brackney, 'Baptists and Continuity', p.2.
12. Brackney, 'Baptists and Continuity', pp.3, 8-9.
13. Zaqueu Moreira de Oliveria, 'The Baptists: Historical Versions of their Origin', p.5.
14. De Oliveria, 'The Baptists', p.5.
15. De Oliveria, 'The Baptists', p.1; Brackney, 'Baptist Continuity', pp.8-9.
16. Monrelle Williams, 'Anglican Identity: Expressing and Confessing the Christian Faith in Worship, Teaching and Evangelism', pp.2-3.
17. Williams, 'Anglican Identity', pp.6-7.
18. Victor Atta-Baffoe, 'Mission and Ministry in the African Church', p.5.

Appendices

19. Similar affirmations of African traditional culture and the importance of African traditional religion were made in the (undocumented) papers by two Baptists - Douglas Waruta (Kenya) and Frank Adams (Ghana).
20. Williams, 'Anglican Identity', pp.4-5.
21. Rubie M. Nottage, 'Anglican Life in the Caribbean', pp.2-5.
22. Nottage, 'Anglican Life', p.7.
23. Sehon Goodridge, 'Colonialisation, Liberation and the Mission of the Church in the Caribbean: An Anglican View', pp.1-3.
24. Cawley Bolt, 'Colonialism, Liberation and the Mission of the Church in the Caribbean: A Baptist View', pp.6, 8. See also Goodridge, 'Colonialisation', pp.9-10.
25. Bolt, 'Colonialism', pp.7, 10; Peter Pinder, 'Baptist Life in the Caribbean', p.3.
26. Martin E. Marty, 'Baptistification Takes Over', Christianity Today, 1983
27. Thomas Ferguson, 'Anglican Life and Continuity in North America', p.2.
28. Ferguson, 'Anglican Life and Continuity in North America', p.5.
29. Malcolm B. Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism: Developments in Southern Baptist Understandings of the Nature and Role of the Churches', p.5.
30. Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism', p.7.
31. David L. Wheeler, 'Keeping the Faith, Keeping Together: Common Challenges for Baptists and Anglicans', pp.4-7.
32. Jill Manton, 'Baptist Ecclesiology in the Australian Context', p.1.
33. De Oliveira, orally; but also see his paper 'The Baptists', pp.6-7.
34. Canons A5 and C15 of the Church of England.
35. Orthodox Creed, art. 38, in W.L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1959), pp.326-7.
36. Steven R. Harmon, 'Baptist Understandings of Authority, With Special Reference to Baptists in North America', pp.1-2; similarly, Brackney, 'Baptists and Continuity', p.3.
37. G. Keith Parker, *Baptists in Europe. History & Confessions of Faith* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), p.57. So also the Baptist Union of Finland, *ibid.*, p.111.
38. Parker, *Baptists in Europe*, p.111.

39. First Baptist World Congress: London, July 11-19, 1905 (London: Baptist Union, 1905), pp.19-21. The words quoted were those of Alexander Maclaren, in leading the assembly. In commemoration of this event, and to urge the recitation of either the Apostles' Creed or the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople at the Centenary Congress in 2005, a document was issued in 2004 entitled 'Confessing the Faith', co-written by four Baptist Professors of theology (Curtis W. Freeman, Steven R. Harmon, Elizabeth Newman, Philip E. Thompson) and signed by a wide range of Baptist educators throughout the world (see Baptist Standard Website, July 2004).
40. William Thompson, 'How to Express and Confess the Christian Faith in Worship and Evangelism', pp.3-5.
41. Fiddes, 'A Particular Faith? Distinctive Features of Christian Faith and Practice held by Baptist Christians in Europe', pp.6-7; the document is called 'What are Baptists? On the Way to Expressing Baptist Identity in a Changing Europe' (European Baptist Federation, 1993).
42. 'The Myanmar Baptist Convention', pp.4-5.
43. Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith and Order Paper 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).
44. Pinder, 'Baptist Life in the Caribbean', p.3; cf. Thompson, pp.3-5.
45. Ronald C. Stevenson, 'An Anglican Understanding of Authority', p.5; Harmon, 'Baptist Understandings of Authority', pp.2-3.
46. Harmon, 'Baptist Understandings of Authority', p.6.
47. Chalton S. Ochola, 'Issues Arising in Local Anglican-Baptist Relations: An Anglican View from Kenya', p.8.
48. Nottage, 'Anglican Life in the Caribbean, p.7.
49. Héctor Zavala, in an oral presentation.
50. Ibid.
51. So Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism', p.13.
52. Atta-Baffoe, 'Mission and Ministry in the African Church', p.6.
53. Frank Adams, 'Overview of Baptist Life in Africa' (oral presentation).
54. Jerson Darif Palhano, oral contribution.
55. Goodridge, 'Colonialisation', p.10; Bolt, 'Colonialism', p.10
56. R.P. Carlos E. Lainfiesta, 'Evangelismo, Proselitismo Y Mision En America Latina', p.6.

Appendices

57. Mackey, 'Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission', pp.8, 9.
58. Goodridge, 'Colonisation', p.7.
59. Bolt, 'Colonialism', p.6.
60. Stanford, 'An Overview of Baptists in North America', p.11.
61. Josué Fonseca, 'The Ministry of Pastoral Oversight', p.4; Mackey, 'Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission', p.4; Lainfiesta, 'Evangelismo', pp.3-4.
62. Louise Kretschmar, 'Baptist-Anglican Interaction in South Africa', Nairobi 2002, p.2.
63. Atta-Baffoe, 'Mission and Ministry in the African Church', p.8.
64. Mackey, 'Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission', p.6.
65. Mackey, 'Evangelism, Proselytism and Mission', p.8, quoting Towards Common Witness (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), pp.24-5.
66. Lainfiesta, "Evangelismo, Proselitismo Y Mision", p.7.
67. De Oliveira, 'The Baptists', section VI.
68. Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism', p.14.
69. So Steve Harmon, written communication.
70. This phrase was made famous by John Bunyan, a Baptist writer, through his book of that title (1678); he applied it to the whole of the Christian life.
71. Fiddes, 'A Particular Faith?', pp.26-8.
72. See 'The Toronto Statement', Recommendation (c), in David R. Holeton (ed.), Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion. The Toronto Statement 'Walk in Newness of Life'. The Findings of the Fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, Toronto 1991 (Grove Worship Series No. 118; Bramcote: Grove Books, 1991).
73. This approach seems to be accepted by the recent An Anglican-Methodist Covenant (London: Methodist Publishing House & Church House Publishing, 2001), which states that 'in our churches baptism is generally seen as the essential first stage of a process of Christian initiation that includes Confirmation and participation in Communion (para. 122, p.40). Again, 'confirmation is regarded by both our churches as a means of grace within the total process of Christian initiation' (para 126, p.41), and 'baptism (in the context of full Christian initiation) lies at the root of all Christian ministry' (para 143, p.145).

74. S. R. Cutting, 'Union between the Anglicans and the Baptists in the Church of North India', p.2.
75. Ibid., p.1.
76. Nolbert Kunonga, 'Christian Initiation. Practical and Pastoral Implications facing Anglicans' (undocumented paper), Nairobi 2002.
77. See, for example, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Patterns and Prayers For Christian Worship. A Guidebook for Worship Leaders (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp.102-4.
78. So Steve Harmon, in a written communication.
79. A survey undertaken by the department of Study and Research of the Baptist World Alliance, 2003-4, showed that in Lithuania 30% of churches were open membership, in Scotland 27%, in Estonia 4%, and in Georgia 2%.
80. This situation was subsequently confirmed by survey (see footnote 76), except that the Baptist Convention of Bolivia reported a 2% open membership.
81. Response of the Burma Baptist Convention, in Max Thurian (ed.), Churches Respond to BEM. Official Responses to the 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry Text' 6 Volumes (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986-88), Vol. IV, p.186. Altogether, nine Baptist unions or conventions responded to BEM.
82. Ibid, p.185.
83. Pinder, 'Baptist Life in the Caribbean', p.1.
84. Fonseca, 'Ministry of Patoral Oversight', p.3.
85. Amparo de Medina (Columbia), 'Identidad Bautista en America Latina', p.11, remarked that it is evangelism that holds Baptists together in unity.
86. Saundra Richardson in discussion of Stevenson's paper.
87. See Stevenson, 'An Anglican Understanding of Authority', p.11.
88. Stevenson, 'An Anglican Understanding of Authority', p.11.
89. Neville Callum, 'Eucharistic Theology', p.4.
90. Yarnell, 'From Christological Ecclesiology to Functional Ecclesiasticism', p.12.
91. Callum, 'Eucharistic Theology', p.5.
92. Verbally, Bishop Héctor Zavala.
93. Thra Wilfred Saw Aung Hla Tun and others, 'A Brief Outline of the Anglican History in Myanmar', p.4.
94. Stevenson, 'An Anglican Understanding of Authority', p.2.

Appendices

95. Anglican-Methodist Covenant (2001), p.52.
96. Fiddes, 'A Particular Faith?', pp.30-1.
97. An exception appears in the Baptist Convention of Georgia, where unusually the language of a three-fold ministry is used: see above, p.60.
98. Fonseca, 'Ministry of Pastoral Oversight', p.3.
99. Bishop Héctor Zavala (Chile), oral contribution.
100. Ferguson, 'Anglican Life and Continuity in North America', pp.5-6.
101. Dharendra Kumar Sahu, 'Episcopacy in the Church of North India', pp.5-6.
102. Baptist Declaration of Principle, in The Constitution of the Church of North India (Delhi: ISPCK, 2001), p.15.
103. Ochola, 'Local Anglican-Baptist Relations in Kenya', Nairobi 2002, p.4.
104. 'The Myanmar Baptist Convention', p.6.
105. For a recent example, see An Anglican-Methodist Covenant (2001).
106. Lambeth 1998, Section IV, Called to Be One, Resolution IV.14 (p.45).
107. Fonseca, 'Ministry of Pastoral Oversight', p.7.
108. Bolt, 'Colonialism', p.5.

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